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# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**THICKENING THE GLOBAL SOF NETWORK**

by

Jonathan F. Post

December 2013

Thesis Advisor:

Second Reader:

Anna Simons

George Lober

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**THICKENING THE GLOBAL SOF NETWORK**

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Major, United States Army  
B.S., United States Military Academy, 2002

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the competence to identify and express emotions, understand emotions, assimilate emotions in thought, and regulate both positive and negative emotions in oneself and others. EI is a necessary, but not fully sufficient, quality Green Berets must possess to establish, nurture, and enhance effective relationships within the joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational arena. As the Special Forces Regiment transitions from intensive participation in operations supporting the Global War on Terrorism to developing the forward-focused Global Special Operations Forces Network, thickening these critical relationships emerges as the foundation of any expected future success. This thesis strives to elucidate the substantial scientific evidence establishing EI as a critical and well-deserving addition to the traditional measures of competence, such as intelligence quotients and general personality. Specifically, the author demonstrates that the skills and abilities associated with EI were deemed most critical by the Office of Strategic Services assessment staff, and that these same skills remain key competencies for accomplishing partner-based special operations today. The author recommends practical changes to the current assessment and selection of Special Forces personnel, as well as for the training and placement of selected Soldiers.



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ARSOF	Army Special Operations Forces
BFF	big five factors
COM	Chief of Mission
dIPFC	dorsolateral prefrontal cortex
DoD	Department of Defense
ECI	Emotional Competence Inventory
EI	emotional intelligence
EQ-I	Emotional Quotient Inventory
IQ	intelligence quotient
JIIM	Joint Interagency Intergovernmental Multinational
MEIS	Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale
MMPI-2-RF	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory 2 Restructured Form
MSCEIT	Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PFC	prefrontal cortex
SF	Special Forces
SFAS	Special Forces Assessment and Selection
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOLO	Special Operations Liaison Officer
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
vmPFC	ventromedial prefrontal cortex



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I have long looked forward to acknowledging the profound influence so many have had on me in connection with this thesis and my life in general. No greater joy exists than to live well and work with others toward a common and just purpose. It is in and through relationships that the world comes alive, and that our eyes are opened to the vibrance and power of love. I owe an unpayable debt of gratitude to my dear friends for shaping and sharpening my mind, body, and spirit.

To my Friend of friends: To you, the great Author and Perfecter of faith, I owe everything. Your still small voice gently guides my heart and mind, increasing in me understanding and appreciation for your unfailing love. I hear you calling for me to loose the chains of injustice and to set the oppressed free. Because of your great love, I am able to act justly, to love mercifully, and to walk humbly before you. You are the greatest paragon of emotional intelligence I know, and it is your example that is ever before me.

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To my three little insurgents: I will forever remember this sunny season of our lives. Although you may not realize it for many years to come, you are the reason for my passion and the legacy of my loving efforts. Teaching you about life, about your emotions and about relating to each other, has taught me more than I think it has taught you. My hope remains that you, Emma, Reece, and Kellan, will challenge every moment of doubt with the truth that there is nothing you can do that will make me love you more, and that there is nothing you can do that will make me love you less. AHAW.

To my mother: Your relentless optimism through the darkest hours awakened hope in me. Because of you, that which was possible became probable, which in turn

became a promise. Thank you for demonstrating faith to us, and for showing me what it means to surrender.

To my family: Family is not a choice, but friendship is. Thank you for being my friends more than just being my family, and for challenging and encouraging me throughout this endeavor. I will strive to be what this work describes, hopefully guaranteeing your friendship for years to come.

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## I. PREFACE: A TRIBUTE TO BALANCE

We are not often encouraged or provided the opportunity to take an exit ramp off the busy highways and byways of our day-to-day lives. Our schedules are full of early morning mandatories, mid-day musts, afternoon obligations, and nightly necessities. As we hustle from one requirement to the next, eating away at the remaining balance of the day, we frequently neglect to care for the truly essential: our families, our friends, and ourselves. We pour out until there is often nothing left, finding a bit more to pour out again the next day, until the deficit is too significant to ignore. Whether our nature results in our bodies slowing to an almost abrupt halt or accelerating at full speed until we crash, the result is the same: mission failure. And in almost every case, whether through self-reflection or observation of others, we recognize the common culprit hiding in the shadows. His name is different for everyone, but his characteristics are the same: too much of this, and not enough of that. Our lives demand balance, but that is easier written than done.

This thesis explores the middle way, the land between objective and subjective, thought and feeling, and outer and inner life. It strives to compel a shift toward the center. It acknowledges that there are those who distrust feelings and are uncomfortable with expressing their emotions, opting rather to remain rational and analytical, holding the world at arm's length. To those who find themselves in this camp, this exploration will encourage you to balance logic with feelings, bringing depth and a vibrance to life that is unattainable without emotion. To their opposites, those who are well-described as subject to the mercies of emotion, being compelled to go where the winds of feeling blow, then this journey will teach them that they “do not need fewer emotions; they need deeper and more truly authentic ones. . . . They also need to learn to embrace critical thinking, by which feelings can be judged and reality more firmly embraced.”<sup>1</sup> Balance of thought and emotion is the middle way, the path we must follow to reach the Global SOF Networked world of 2020 and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> David G. Benner, *Surrender to Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 31.

My own research journey has challenged some of my most deeply-seated beliefs and expanded my understanding about relationships, leadership, professional military service, and love. One of my hopes is that you, as a participant in this adventure, will incorporate blocks of time to intentionally reflect, as I have, on matters of the heart. Sentimentalism is not what I seek, as it is a counterfeit version of authentic emotional experience, which cheapens the encounter and limits the rewards of genuine self-discovery and expression. As Psalm 42:7 recognizes that “deep calls to deep,” so too is my hope that this co-exploration will draw you into the depths of the human experience, awaking in you a desire to become present and intentional in every relationship. To be clear then, this thesis is essentially a tribute to balance, and requires your active participation as a reader to advance our collective understanding and appreciation for the emotional dimension of intelligence and its role in developing friendships.

## II. INTRODUCTION

“Who succeeds in forming and leading a Great Group? He or she is almost always a pragmatic dreamer. They are people who get things done, but they are people with immortal longings. Often, they are scientifically minded people with poetry in their souls. . . . They are always people with an original vision. A dream is at the heart of every Great Group.”<sup>2</sup>

Although this thesis focuses on the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) and the role it ought to play in thickening the Global Special Operations Forces (SOF) Network, it also strives to recognize that EI is one of dozens of other necessary, but not solely sufficient, competencies required to accomplish the mission. As the Special Forces (SF) Regiment re-aligns its activities to meet the demands of tomorrow, SF operators, as the practitioners of peace, need to remember that SOF culture is a reflection of collective priorities. If appreciating balance finds its way into “commander’s intent, key tasks, and desired end state,” then the force will thrive, strengthened by the supportive bonds of cared-for families, friends, and fellow Green Berets. “In the end,” as the *USSOCOM 2020* guidance relates, “our success is ultimately rooted in how well we take care of our most precious resource—the SOF warriors and their families.”<sup>3</sup> SOF warriors, who have taken the time and who have been intentional about caring for themselves and their families, are more able to pour out of their abundance service to others. Understanding that the emotional dimension is an integral component of a warrior’s overall health and well-being, it is imperative to investigate the role, if any, emotional intelligence plays in accomplishing SF missions today, in 2020, and beyond.

Before offering a brief outline and describing the inspiration of this work, it is necessary to acknowledge that the science and vast implications of EI are well beyond the scope and grasp of this thesis. In many ways, this work scratches only the surface. Despite its cursory nature, however, it does reveal that EI skills and abilities are

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<sup>2</sup> Warren Bennis and Patricia Ward Biederman, *Organizing Genius: The Secrets of Creative Collaboration* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1998), 14.

<sup>3</sup> *United States Special Operations Command 2020: Forging the Tip of the Spear*, 2, <http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/SOCOM2020Strategy.pdf> (accessed May 15, 2013).

assessable, trainable, and learnable, and are necessary for developing and sustaining partnerships—an essential task for every Green Beret.

Enhancing the Special Forces Regiment is this work's central interest. The inspiration to study emotions, and emotional intelligence and its application to the military profession stemmed from a comment the author's Group Commander made to him in 2012. He insisted that the special operations community would greatly benefit from having more officers who possessed high emotional intelligence. At the time, the concept of EI was almost completely foreign to the author, except in its use as a phrase describing someone of maturity and level-headedness. Although these attributes are associated with EI, they certainly do not describe it fully. To satisfy that need, the initial portion of this thesis looks at the history and science of EI, and the role of emotions in decision-making in general. Although somewhat clinical, the literature review is fundamental in that it establishes a common operating picture of how the human brain processes emotions. Properly oriented toward emotions in general, the literature review gives way to the heart of the thesis, a careful comparison between how a historical special operations organization, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), incorporated emotional competencies, and how current SOF handle EI.

Ideally, this thesis would include a review of the role, if any, EI played in the assessment and selection of Green Berets in the past. However, no comprehensive review or detailed study of Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) exists that includes emotional intelligence, yet one does exist for the OSS and the assessment of operatives, spies, and saboteurs during World War II. Considering the close connection between the OSS and the SF Regiment, the second portion of this thesis provides a detailed review of the OSS assessment methodology and the selected variables that closely relate to EI.

Correspondingly, the third section of this thesis focuses on how emotional intelligence is related to thickening the Global SOF Network—the critical task set before the special operations community.

In an effort to encourage further study, the final chapter focuses on recommendations for selection, training, and placement of Green Berets; it also highlights two additional areas that complement EI—networks and trust.

This thesis is written generally as a comparison between how the OSS of World War II regarded EI and how the special operations community of today handles it. The literature review describes the science of EI and establishes the idea of balance as the synthesis of emotion and cognition, the pairing required to build, maintain, and nurture relationships. Love and authentic concern for, and care of, friends are critical outputs of a balanced approach to partnerships. Although essential components of friendship, incorporating the analysis and description of these outputs is beyond the limited scope of this thesis. Rather, this thesis attempts to pay close attention to the inputs and throughputs of emotion in military partnerships, which, when well-understood and managed, collectively describe aspects of EI. Understanding the importance of EI's role in the day-to-day effort of partnering friendships in military networks made the comparison between the OSS and SOF a natural vehicle from which to explore how effectively an organization may understand and incorporate the emotional dimension. The comparison also renders a compelling argument that the special operations community today undervalues the role of emotional competence, demonstrated through SFAS's limited assessment of candidates' EI, the absence of emotion-centric training, the overlooking of EI in the placement of operators, and the disregarding of EI-related skills and abilities in talent management.

As the quote at the beginning of this section suggests, transforming the Global SOF Network into a "Great Group" of like-minded professionals requires an original vision, and a dream infused with immortal longings. The heart and cadence of the special operations community require the drumbeat of balance between cognition and emotion, keeping time to the rhythm inspired by intelligent Soldiers who are capable of understanding their own emotions and the emotions of others, and who appropriately assimilate those emotions into thought and action. Such Soldiers are capable of developing and nurturing friendships with willing and capable partners to thwart the enemy's efforts. Only in balance, with adequate measures of professional and personal



competencies, can SOF expect to achieve the mission with well selected, trained, and placed individuals. This thesis is intended to further the ongoing dialogue about EI within the special operations community, and encourage individuals to explore the depths of the emotional dimension within the human domain.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. SOF 2020: YOU CANNOT SURGE TRUST

As the Special Forces Regiment transitions from intensive participation in operations supporting the Global War on Terrorism, to developing the forward-focused worldwide SOF Network, the importance of establishing, nurturing, and enhancing effective relationships within the joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) arena emerges as the foundation of any expected future success. During the Aspen Security Forum in July 2012, Admiral William McRaven, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, in addressing a question about training foreign partners, emphasized the importance of understanding the “human domain.” He stated, “We’re learning what their culture is, so next time we come back in, they understand who we are, [and] we understand who they are. You’ve got to build that trust. You can’t surge trust.”<sup>4</sup> The recent inclusion of the term “human domain” invites those within the special operations community to dive into the deep waters of the human experience and explore the powerful nature of emotions and the role they play in developing relationships built on trust.

Building enduring partnerships is the cornerstone of any Green Beret’s professional endeavors. Friendships are built on trust, which is earned through the intentional pursuit of unity through mutual support. Trust consists of two primary components: 1) an emotional response based on 2) a performance track record.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> William H. McRaven, as cited in David Trulio – “You Can’t Surge Trust – Insights from the Opening of the Aspen Security Forum.” <http://securitydebrief.com/2012/07/27/you-cant-surge-trust-insights-from-the-opening-of-the-aspen-security-forum/#axzz2lhHoqIg6> (accessed February 11, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Rebecca E. Rehfeld, “Organizational Trust & Emotional Intelligence: An Appreciative Inquiry into the Language of the Twenty-First Century Leader,” *UMI Dissertations Publishing*, 2002, 67. UMO No. 3034480.

Together, these components develop confidence between individuals, within teams, and throughout organizations. The comprehensive goal of developing the Global SOF Network inspires a question—how should we begin? Frederick W. Faber once noted that “many a friendship—long, loyal, and self-sacrificing—rested at first upon no thicker a foundation than a kind word.”<sup>6</sup> Genuine kindness is critical, but it is not the essential quality needed to ensure friendships are both capacious and dependable. Developing friendships that are long, loyal, and self-sacrificing would enhance the Regiment’s ability to defend and advance national interests. However, such friendships require further exposition and collective ownership.

Building and thickening the global SOF community demands a *common unity* of purpose, language, and intent, and signals a sharp departure from unilateral actions. Recent strategic guidance redirects Department of Defense (DoD) efforts toward the Asia-Pacific region, while maintaining focused efforts throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.<sup>7</sup> The majority of international partners that reside in conflict rich regions, such as Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, are culturally collectivistic, emphasizing “conformity to group norms, interconnectedness, relational harmony, and concern for in-group interests.”<sup>8</sup> Such cultures, as Bernard Mayer suggests, favor developing emotion-based relationships through personal interaction, in contrast to U.S. and Western

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<sup>6</sup> Frederick William Faber, <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/f/frederickw556266.html> (accessed February 11, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Defense Strategic Guidance, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense* (January 2012), [http://www.defense.gov/news/defense\\_strategic\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/defense_strategic_guidance.pdf) (accessed February 22, 2013); *National Security Strategy* (May, 2010), [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf) (accessed February 22, 2013); and *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America: Redefining America’s Military Leadership* (February 2011), [http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2011-02/020811084800\\_2011\\_NMS\\_-\\_08\\_FEB\\_2011.pdf](http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2011-02/020811084800_2011_NMS_-_08_FEB_2011.pdf) (accessed February 22, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Michael L. Spangle and Myra W. Isenhardt, *Negotiation: Communication in Diverse Settings* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 369.

convictions that partnerships can be harnessed through common cognitive and reason-based interests.<sup>9</sup> As Rushworth Kidder suggests, truly important relationships are not transactional (Western), but emanate from shared values and understanding.<sup>10</sup> This reality represents a collision of cultures, and presents an obstacle and opportunity for the Special Forces Regiment to hone friendship-building skills and abilities through detailed study, increased knowledge, and effective practice.

Ralph Waldo Emerson noted that the two primary components of friendship are truth and tenderness.<sup>11</sup> He poetically combined man's cognitive and emotional streams into one mighty river, illustrating the necessary convergence of both forms of intelligence in developing and enjoying true friendships. Consequently, one should be truthful through tenderness, or, as the Bible suggests, "Speaking the truth in love."<sup>12</sup> When discussing the moral component of society, Sissela Bok suggests that truth-telling promotes trust, which "functions as a foundation of relations among human beings."<sup>13</sup> Although trust is centrally located in the military lexicon, tenderness and love are found only on the periphery, if at all. Despite the discomfort that may accompany discussing such terms, it is imperative to make the connection: the most effective relationships, whether between husband and wife or Special Operations Liaison Officer (SOLO) and Chief of Mission (COM), require the emotional stream of tenderness and love to

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<sup>9</sup> Bernard Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict: A Guide to Engagement and Intervention*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 95. This assertion is explored and supported in subsequent sections, primarily in the cross-cultural analysis provided in Chapter V, 50–53.

<sup>10</sup> Rushworth M. Kidder, *How Good People Make Tough Choices: Resolving the Dilemmas of Ethical Living* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers Inc., 1995), 231.

<sup>11</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Brooks Atkinson (New York, NY: Random House, 1940), 228–229.

<sup>12</sup> Ephesians 4:15 (New International Version).

<sup>13</sup> Sissela Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1999), 31.

encourage trust, support, and dependability. As Emerson concludes, “I do not wish to treat friendships daintily, but with roughest courage. When they are real, they are not glass threads or frostwork, but the solidest thing we know.”<sup>14</sup>

If building relationships is so essential to the Special Forces mission, then it stands to reason that selection and placement criteria, as well as training modules, are needed to guide and inform this critical mission component. However, careful analysis of doctrine indicates that little or no emphasis is placed on selecting or training Green Berets on the development, understanding, and importance of emotions in self or others.<sup>15</sup> Although recognition of its significance via a field of study is younger than the average Green Beret, the concept of EI provides a new lens for viewing the critically important task of building effective relationships. Generally speaking, EI refers to the competence to identify and express emotions, understand emotions, assimilate emotions in thought, and regulate both positive and negative emotions in oneself and others.

## **B. THE HISTORY AND CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Since its first presentation as a separate intelligence in 1990 by Peter Salovey and John Mayer, the veracity of emotional intelligence has been challenged and advanced in

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<sup>14</sup> Emerson, *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 228.

<sup>15</sup> Amanda Shipman, Tamara Friedrich, Brandon Vessey, Shane Connelly, Eric Day, Alyssa Douglass, . . . & Gregory A. Ruark, *A Model of Emotion Management for U.S. Army*, Research Product 2011–03 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2010); Seth Kaplan, Jose Cortina, Gregory A. Ruark, Kara Orvis, Katie Engel, & Krista Langkamer, *Emotions at Work: Leader Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities to Enhance Soldier Performance*, Technical Report 1302 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2012); Gerald F. Sewell, “Emotional Intelligence and the Army Leadership Requirements Model,” *Military Review* 89, no. 6 (November–December 2009): 93–98, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/225300131/fulltextPDF?accountid=12702> (accessed February 15, 2013); Robert B. Lackey, “Emotional Intelligence Training: A Missing Element in our Army,” *Fires* (July–August 2011): 38–45, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/896467697/fulltextPDF?accountid=12702> (accessed February 15, 2013); and Holly Livingstone, Maria Nadjwon-Foster, and Sonya Smithers, *Emotional Intelligence & Military Leadership*, Minister of National Defence (Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2002), [http://www.raf.mod.uk/pmdair/rafcms/mediafiles/225C29C0\\_5056\\_A318\\_A8A6D465091F140C.pdf](http://www.raf.mod.uk/pmdair/rafcms/mediafiles/225C29C0_5056_A318_A8A6D465091F140C.pdf) (accessed March 8, 2013).

both academic and commercial circles.<sup>16</sup> Broadly, there exist three distinct emotional intelligence constructs substantive enough to merit attention. The first, created by Salovey and Mayer, is based on abilities and is measured by both consensus and expert evaluation.<sup>17</sup> Two tests, the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) and the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), evaluate the construct's four branches: 1) perception of emotion, 2) integration and assimilation of emotion, 3) knowledge about emotions, and 4) management of emotions.

The second construct evaluates mixed traits through peer and self-reporting that overlap with at least four of the Big Five personality dimensions, which are openness,

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<sup>16</sup> Catherine S. Daus and Neal M. Ashkanasy, "The Case for the Ability-Based Model of Emotional Intelligence in Organizational Behavior," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 26, no. 4 (June 2005): 453–466, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4093840> (accessed January 28, 2013); John D. Mayer, Peter Salovey, and David R. Caruso, "Emotional Intelligence: Theory, Findings, and Implications," *Psychological Inquiry* 15, no. 3 (2004a): 197–215, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20447229> (accessed February 15, 2013); F. William Brown and Dan Moshavi, "Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence: A Potential Pathway for an Increased Understanding of Interpersonal Influence," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 26, no. 7 (November 2005): 867–871, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4093959> (accessed January 28, 2013); Edwin A. Locke, "Why Emotional Intelligence is an Invalid Concept," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 26, no. 4 (June 2005): 425–431, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4093837> (accessed January 28, 2013); Frank J. Landy, "Some Historical and Scientific Issues Related to Research of Emotional Intelligence," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 26, no. 4 (June 2005): 411–424, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4093836> (accessed January 28, 2013); Jeffrey M. Conte, "A Review and Critique of Emotional Intelligence Measures," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 26, no. 4 (June 2005): 433–440, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4093838> (accessed January 28, 2013); Frank Krueger, Aaron K. Barbey, Kevin McCabe, Maren Strenziok, Giovanna Zamboni, Jeffrey Solomon, . . . and Vernon Smith, "The Neural Bases of Key Competencies of Emotional Intelligence," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 106, no. 52 (2009): 22488, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40536471> (accessed January 28, 2013); Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer, "Emotional Intelligence," *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality* 9 (1990): 185–211, [http://www.unh.edu/emotional\\_intelligence/EIAssets/EmotionalIntelligenceProper/EI1990%20Emotional%20Intelligence.pdf](http://www.unh.edu/emotional_intelligence/EIAssets/EmotionalIntelligenceProper/EI1990%20Emotional%20Intelligence.pdf) (accessed February 15, 2013); Jacob Joseph, Kevin Berry, and Satish P. Deshpande, "Impact of Emotional Intelligence and Other Factors on Perception of Ethical Behavior of Peers," *Journal of Business Ethics* 89, no. 4 (November 2009): 539–546, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27735210> (accessed January 28, 2013); and Ernest H. O'Boyle Jr., Ronald H. Humphrey, Jeffrey M. Pollack, Thomas H. Hawver, and Paul A. Story, "The Relation between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 32, no. 5 (2001): 788–818, <http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.nps.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=2c7ad2d7-c9d1-4257-83df-991ffc7eadbb%40sessionmgr111&vid=2&hid=128> (accessed January 28, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Salovey and Mayer, "Emotional Intelligence;" Mayer, John D. Mayer, Peter Salovey, and David R. Caruso, "A Further Consideration of the Issues of Emotional Intelligence," *Psychological Inquiry* 15, no. 3 (2004b): 249–255, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20447235> (accessed February 15, 2013); Daus and Ashkanasy, "The Case for the Ability-Based Model of Emotional Intelligence in Organizational Behavior;" and Gerald Matthews, Moshe Zeidner, and Richard D. Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence: Science and Myth* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 9–28 and 180–204.

conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.<sup>18</sup> Daniel Goleman created this test, commonly known as the ECI (Emotional Competence Inventory), to assess emotional competencies and positive social behavior through four discrete clusters: 1) self-awareness, 2) social awareness, 3) self-management, and 4) social skills.

The third construct, created by Reuven Bar-On, produces an overall score as well as scores for five composite scales: 1) intrapersonal, 2) interpersonal, 3) adaptability, 4) general mood, and 5) stress management.<sup>19</sup> Also based on mixed traits, Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) popularized the concept of EQ, and, along with Goleman's ECI, spawned numerous commercial offshoots that promise measurable improvement in areas as broad as leadership and job performance, as well as for enhancing or rebuilding broken relationships.<sup>20</sup> All three constructs point to the role emotions play in enhancing one's composite intelligence, and link what happens inside one's mind with what happens outside through relationships and the environment. Despite the evidence supporting emotion's role in increasing composite intelligence, and thus boosting an individual's effectiveness in relating to his environment, scholars have historically undersold the relevance and importance of emotions in comparison to reason.

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<sup>18</sup> For further information about the BFF see one of the following: Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 78–126; Daniel Goleman, *The Brain and Emotional Intelligence: New Insights* (Northampton, MA: More than Sound, LLC, 2011); Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 30–31, 38, 48–50, and 255; Annie McKee, Richard Boyatzis, and Frances Johnston, *Becoming a Resonant Leader* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2008); Conte, “A Review and Critique of Emotional Intelligence Measures;” and Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*.

<sup>19</sup> Conte, “A Review and Critique of Emotional Intelligence Measures;” and Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*.

<sup>20</sup> Adele B. Lynn, *The EQ Difference: A Powerful Plan for Putting Emotional Intelligence to Work* (New York, NY: American Management Association, 2005); Hendrie Weisinger, *Emotional Intelligence at Work: The Untapped Edge for Success* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998); Steve Simmons and John C. Simmons, Jr., *Measuring Emotional Intelligence: The Ground Breaking Guide to Applying the Principles of Emotional Intelligence* (Arlington, TX: The Summit Publishing Group, 1997); Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*; McKee, Boyatzis, and Johnston, *Becoming a Resonant Leader*; Kaplan, et al., *Emotions at Work*; and Shipman, et al., *A Model of Emotion Management*.

### C. MARRIAGE OF REASON AND EMOTION

Subsequently, reason and rational thought enjoy a seemingly permanent privileged status, while emotion is often denigrated to a second class status in decision-making. At the core, “rationality is privileged because [mankind] wants to be rational.”<sup>21</sup> Additionally, we elevate rationality because we want it to tell us what to do.<sup>22</sup> Conversely, John Elster explains that emotions are devalued because they are “seen mainly as sources of irrationality and as obstacles to a well-ordered life.”<sup>23</sup> This seems to resonate with the Stoics’ maxim that reason – that which separates man from animals – was nearly synonymous with virtue. As defined by Zeno and Chrysippus, virtue was “a disposition and faculty of the governing principle of the soul brought into being by reason, or rather: reason itself, consistent, firm and unwavering.”<sup>24</sup> The Stoics believed that emotions corrupted reason, serving as non-assented judgments of action.<sup>25</sup> Supported by a history of antagonistic views toward emotion, the majority of EI opponents today reason that emotions cannot and should not constitute a separate field of intelligence.

Edwin Locke suggests that one cannot “reason with emotion” and claims that the ultimate motive for establishing EI as equal to cognitive intelligence (IQ) is egalitarian: “redefining what it means to be intelligent so that everyone will, in some form, be equal

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<sup>21</sup> John Elster, *Solomonic Judgments: Studies in the Limitation of Rationality* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1989b).

<sup>22</sup> John Elster, “Some Unresolved Problems in the Theory of Rational Behavior,” *Acta Sociologica* (Taylor & Francis Ltd) 36, no. 3 (1993): 179–190, <http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.nps.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=d5ac4d65-46c4-4856-b3c4-087768c3959a%40sessionmgr114&vid=2&hid=114> (accessed August 30, 2012).

<sup>23</sup> John Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1989a).

<sup>24</sup> Plutarch, *De virt. Mor.* 3, 441c., as cited in A. A. Long, “The Logical Basis of Stoic Ethics,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, New Series 71 (1970 – 1971): 95, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4544803> (accessed April 17, 2013). See also Seneca, *Letters* 76.9–10: “What is best in man? Reason: with this he precedes the animals and follows the gods. Therefore, perfect reason is man’s peculiar good, the rest he shares with animals and plants. . . . Reason – which when right and perfect makes the full sum of human happiness. . . . This perfect reason is called virtue and it is identical to rectitude.”

<sup>25</sup> John Sellars, *Stoicism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 114–119.



in intelligence to everyone else.”<sup>26</sup> Additionally, Frank Landy argues that EI is so broadly defined, encompassing existing constructs, such as academic intelligence, personality, tacit or procedural knowledge, technical knowledge, and experience, that it does not sufficiently add to the explanation or prediction of common outcomes.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Jeffrey Conte criticizes both the measurement and psychometric properties of emotional intelligence. He argues that the current EI tests fail to identify what is measured, making it difficult to examine content validity. Furthermore, he suggests that researchers’ inability to converge on a single construct indicates a lack of scientific proof that should generate more research and experimentation.<sup>28</sup>

Although opponents’ arguments need to be addressed, most notably the lack of agreement on a basic definition and construct, the body of evidence supporting emotional intelligence is expansive and compelling. In support of EI, Mayer, Salovey, and David Caruso posit that “emotion problems, more so than the usual cognitive IQ test problems, often involve multiple correct *and* multiple incorrect answers.”<sup>29</sup> This reality refutes the standard that intelligence tests must evaluate answers exclusively in the affirmative (only one correct answer). Additionally, and in the particular case of the MEIS and MSCEIT tests, sufficient evidence exists to support their discriminant and predictive validity, as well as reliability, furthering the notion that emotional intelligence in general, and Salovey and Mayer’s model in particular, are viable concepts.<sup>30</sup> Specifically, their model and its related tests assess skills, not traits as other EI constructs and personality related tests do. Distinguishing skill from trait permits EI, as Mayer and Salovey define and test it, to satisfy the three broad criteria of traditional intelligence: (1) evaluation by more-or-less correct answers, (2) demonstration of specific patterns of correlation to other known

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<sup>26</sup> Locke, “Why Emotional Intelligence is an Invalid Concept,” 426.

<sup>27</sup> Landy, “Some Historical,” 419.

<sup>28</sup> Conte, “A Review and Critique,” 437.

<sup>29</sup> Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, “A Further Consideration,” 251.

<sup>30</sup> Daus and Ashkanasy, “The Case for the Ability-Based,” Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, “Emotional Intelligence,” and “A Further Consideration,” and Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*, 175–226.

intelligences, and (3) development with age.<sup>31</sup> EI proponents understand the embryonic nature of emotional intelligence studies, and support, just as opponents do, further research and experimentation to test its significance as a component of intelligence.<sup>32</sup>

One example of such research indicates that emotions are generated and managed by a distinctive neural mechanism that suggests the ability to perceive, develop, and enhance decision-making through emotive, not cognitive, dominance.<sup>33</sup> Figure 1 depicts the two separate pathways—emotive and cognitive—that govern decision-making. “In a by now famous set of experiments performed in the 1980s, Benjamin Libet, a physiologist, found that brain signals associated with movement occurred half a second before the person was conscious of deciding to move.”<sup>34</sup>

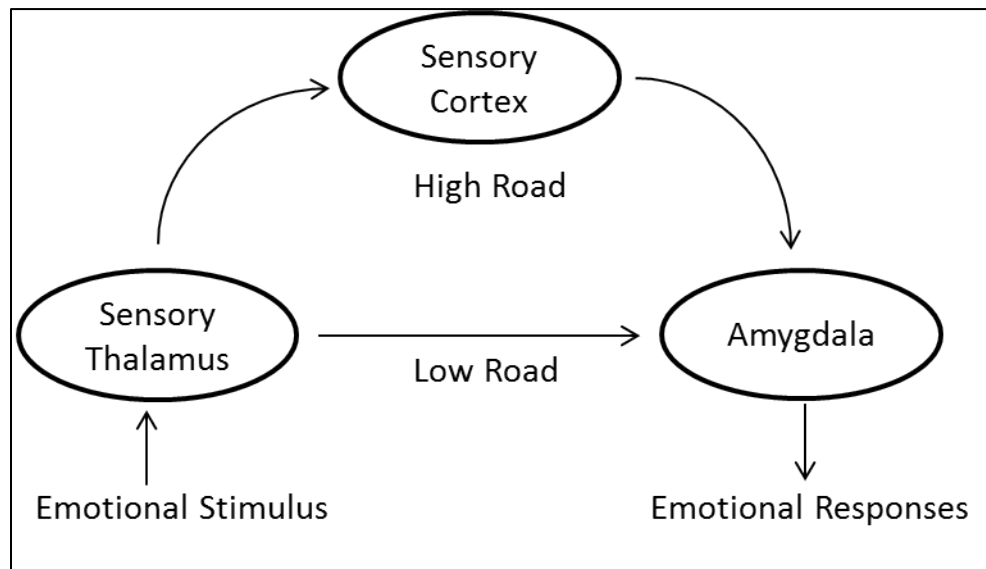


Figure 1. Pathways of Decision Making

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<sup>31</sup> Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, “Emotional Intelligence,” 200.

<sup>32</sup> Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, “A Further Consideration,” 254.

<sup>33</sup> John Elster, *Strong Feelings: Emotion, Addiction and Human Behavior* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); Janice Gross Stein, “Rational Deterrence against Irrational Adversaries,” in *Complex Deterrence: Strategy in the Global Age*, ed. T.V. Paul, Patrick M. Morgan, and James J. Wirtz, 58–82 (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2009); Krueger, et al., “The Neural Bases;” and Goleman, *The Brain and New Insights*.

<sup>34</sup> Stein, “Rational Deterrence,” 68.

This phenomenon illustrates the direct “low road” pathway and supports the argument that conscious cognition is bypassed prior to action. Elster suggests that “emotions and cravings might sometimes be so strong as to short-circuit rational choice, or even choice altogether. At their strongest, these urges seem to have an overpowering quality that leaves little room for comparison and choice.”<sup>35</sup> Indeed, research suggests “that emotion precedes choice, emotions trigger choices, and emotion follows in the wake of choice to shape what people learn from their choices.”<sup>36</sup> Elster eloquently describes the power of emotion and its consequences as follows:

Emotions matter because they move and disturb us, and because, through their links with social norms, they stabilize social life. They also interfere with our thought processes, making them less rational than they would otherwise be. In particular, they induce unrealistic expectations about what we can do and achieve, and unrealistic beliefs about other people’s opinions about ourselves. . . . When we are under the sway of strong emotions, we easily indulge in wishful thinking, such as the belief that all good things go together and that there is no need to make hard choices. The belief that one can have the motivating power of emotions without their distorting power is itself an instance of the same fallacy. Emotions provide a meaning and sense of direction to life, but they also prevent us from going steadily in that direction.<sup>37</sup>

The power of emotions and their influence over decision-making and action are at the heart of emotional intelligence.<sup>38</sup> Mayer and Salovey’s four branches address the critical need to perceive, assimilate, and ultimately govern emotions, thus leaving us masters of our own fate rather than subjects of passion’s folly. Or as Hamlet aptly puts it: “Give me that man / That is not passion’s slave.”<sup>39</sup>

Perception of emotion is at the forefront of the sequential maturation of EI. Perception is based on awareness, which is a cognitive skill that undergoes a development similar to cognition in general. Lane and Schwartz proposed a model that

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<sup>35</sup> Elster, *Strong Feelings*, 12.

<sup>36</sup> Stein, “Rational Deterrence,” 68.

<sup>37</sup> Elster, *Nuts and Bolts*, 69–70.

<sup>38</sup> James J. Gross and Oliver P. John, “Wise Emotion Regulation,” in *The Wisdom in Feeling: Psychological Processes in Emotional Intelligence*, eds. Lisa Feldman Barrett and Peter Salovey (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2002), 297–318.

<sup>39</sup> William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 2. <http://shakespeare-navigators.com/hamlet/H32.html>.

depicts five levels of graduated emotional awareness, requiring an individual to master the previous level before advancing to the next. The five levels, in ascending order, are: (1) awareness of physical sensations, (2) action tendencies, (3) single emotions, (4) blends of emotions, and (5) blends of blends of emotional experience (or the capacity to appreciate complexity in the experiences of self and others).<sup>40</sup> Cognitive maturation encourages but does not guarantee emotional awareness. Although the capacity may exist, perceiving emotion is only possible through intentional learning and reflection, and is often connected with the nurturing role parents play in the life of a child. Since emotional awareness requires training to develop, and is connected to neurological development, it stands to reason that specific areas of the brain are responsible for governing emotions, and that growth in these areas signals the separation between emotional and cognitive intelligence. To that end, recent advances in technology provide scientists the ability to associate specific brain areas with unique mental functions.

Like cartographers meticulously mapping serpentine coastlines, neuropsychologists are now able to draw pathways between sub-regions of the prefrontal cortex (PFC), the brain's executive center, and an individual's ability to solve personal and interpersonal problems, manage impulses, express feelings effectively, and relate well to others.<sup>41</sup> Additional components of the brain, such as the anterior cingulate, right amygdala, insular cortex, and subcortex are directly related to one's self-awareness, and one's ability to express empathy, and process distressing and strong emotions. These regions of the brain are distinctive from the neocortex, which manages cognitive operations (verbal, mathematical, and spatial IQs). Being able to identify different areas of the brain responsible for cognition and emotional management lends credibility to those who support EI as a separate intelligence. However, it is still critical to address whether these disparate regions operate in parallel or in series. Are they interfacing and mutually reliant, which would support a more collective and comprehensive view of intelligence? Or do they rely upon one another, resulting in diminished capability if a subcomponent is

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<sup>40</sup> Barrett and Salovey, *The Wisdom in Feeling*, 273.

<sup>41</sup> Goleman, *The Brain and New Insights*.

impaired or low functioning? Fortunately, a study published in late 2009 offers evidence to support the notion that these distinct intelligences operate in parallel, not as a series.

The study tested damaged brain regions in combat veterans from the Vietnam War who suffered focal penetrating head injuries. Specifically, the functions of the ventromedial PFC (vmPFC) and dorsolateral PFC (dlPFC) were analyzed, areas which were hypothesized to mediate the perception and management of emotions. The study examined two key competencies of emotional intelligence: 1) strategic EI—which is the competency to understand emotional information and apply it for the management of the self and others, and 2) experiential EI—which is the competency to perceive emotional information and apply it for integration into thinking. Patients were given the MSCEIT as well as standard neuropsychological tests to assess their EI competencies, cognitive functioning, and intelligence. A control group of patients without head injuries was also assessed; the groups were matched with respect to age, level of education, and pre-injury general intelligence.

The results indicate that those with vmPFC injuries suffered decreased capacity, resulting in “social incompetence, diminished sensitivity to socially relevant stimuli and situational nuances, problems in interpersonal interactions, and abnormal changes in mood and personality.”<sup>42</sup> Likewise, those suffering from dlPFC injuries demonstrated sub-optimal levels of thinking and judgment, which is indicative of the PFC’s role in incorporating emotional information into the orchestration of thought, intention, and action. Ultimately, this study “broadens our understanding on how EI is mediated by the social brain and demonstrates that it can be dissociated from cognitive intelligence.”<sup>43</sup> However, while compelling, the analysis fails to answer a critical question: can EI-related skills be learned, or relearned, increasing one’s ability to self-regulate and associate with others? The following historical vignette provides evidence to support these possibilities.

Phineas Gage was a railroad foreman during the 1840s in Vermont. Known to be a “great favorite” of the men in his charge and regarded as “the most efficient and

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<sup>42</sup> Krueger, et al., “The Neural Bases,” 22488.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 22489.

capable foreman” by his employers, his disposition and reputation abruptly changed after a particularly gruesome accident sustained on the afternoon of September 13, 1848.<sup>44</sup> While preparing the bedrock with his tamping iron, Phineas accidentally detonated the explosives. The force of the blast rifled the tamping iron into his left jaw, through his prefrontal cortex, and out the top of his skull. Miraculously, he recovered from the traumatic injury, but not without sustaining significant impairment of his emotional competencies.

He was still able to read and speak, and he performed well above average on cognitive ability tests. However, it became clear he had lost his ability to experience emotion; he was emotionless at even the saddest misfortunes or the happiest occasions.<sup>45</sup>

He began making irrational decisions, and moved from job to job until eventually gaining employment with a circus.

Surprisingly, Phineas began to re-associate more effectively with members of society some years after his injury, gaining employment in Chile and traveling widely in association with his near celebrity status. Numerous 21<sup>st</sup> century doctors, after examining medical records and eye-witness accounts, and recreating Mr. Gage’s injuries, hypothesize that this adjustment represents an authentic social recovery. In particular, Dr. Malcolm Macmillan suggests that “someone or something gave enough structure to their lives [speaking collectively about individuals with similar traumatic brain injuries] for them to relearn lost social and personal skills.”<sup>46</sup> Successful habilitation, at least in the case of Mr. Phineas Gage, seems to indicate that lost emotional competencies *can* be restored through training and adaptive behaviors. Likewise, his recovery supports the

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<sup>44</sup> Stephen P. Robbins & Timothy A. Judge, *Essentials of Organizational Behavior*, 11th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2012), 38.

<sup>45</sup> Robbins and Judge, *Essentials of Organizational Behavior*, 38.

<sup>46</sup> Malcolm Macmillan, “Phineas Gage—Unravelling the Myth,” *The Psychologist* 21, no. 9 (September 2008): 828–831, 831, [http://www.thepsychologist.org.uk/archive/archive\\_home.cfm?volumeID=21&editionID=164&ArticleID=1399](http://www.thepsychologist.org.uk/archive/archive_home.cfm?volumeID=21&editionID=164&ArticleID=1399) (accessed February 22, 2013).

current science that neurogenesis (discussed below) aids in the development of new skills and abilities, thereby providing individuals the opportunity and ability to learn critical emotional competencies.

In addition to suggesting that EI belongs in a separate category from cognitive intelligence, this vignette also supports the idea that individuals *can* increase their level of emotional intelligence through learning. Before discussing two studies that further support EI's learnability, it is important to briefly describe the science behind the miracle of learning.

Neurogenesis is the process that generates 10,000 new brain cells every day.<sup>47</sup> Half of all newly created brain cells migrate to critical need areas in the brain, aiding existing brain cells by assuming their same role. Destinations within the brain may differ, but science is showing that it is areas of learning that often receive these new cells. The continual reshaping of the brain, based on experiences, intentions, and desires, is called neuroplasticity, which explains how circuitry develops to master new tasks.<sup>48</sup> In laymen's terms, this is the process of developing new habits or overcoming old ones. What is most difficult about this is that it takes time and intentionality to either develop new circuits to manage developing skills, or abandon old circuits that no longer serve an individual's needs.

Recognizing the requirement for time and intentionality, two separate groups of scientists conducted a series of experiments in 2008 and 2009 with participants who suffered from either traumatic or acute brain injuries. Participants suffered from a diminished ability to interpret emotion in others, chronic social difficulties or isolation, apparent disregard or a lack of awareness of social cues, or inappropriate social responding—all abilities directly related to EI. The experiments implemented a range of training methodologies, which included self-instruction training, errorless learning, facial

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<sup>47</sup> Goleman, *The Brain and New Insights*.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

affect recognition, and stories of emotional inference.<sup>49</sup> After the training, participants demonstrated an increased ability to perceive emotions in others and to relate more effectively in their natural surroundings, suggesting that training can improve emotion perception, a fundamental aspect of EI. In response to one of the experiment's outcomes, Dr. Bornhofen noted that "the results are cause for optimism that people suffering traumatic brain injuries can be retrained to identify emotions in others, and to begin functioning normally again."<sup>50</sup> Whether impairment or low functioning is a result of injury or poor development, these studies, and the science of neuropsychology, support the notion that competencies associated with emotional intelligence are trainable, resulting in an increased ability to relate effectively with others. Understanding and effectively associating with one's operational environment is an especially critical skill for Special Forces operators charged with thickening the Global SOF Network, as the following indicates.

During a recent video teleconference in February 2013 with Naval Postgraduate students, Major General (MG) Michael K. Nagata, the Deputy Director of Special Operation, suggested that the traditional approach to winning arguments through reason alone was ineffective at best when it comes to securing favorable decisions from JIIM partners in the National Capital Region and around the globe.<sup>51</sup> As a veteran Special Forces operator, MG Nagata epitomizes the forward thinking, people-focused professional who is well equipped to "build rapport" and navigate the human domain. He likened the JIIM environment to a psychological battlefield, rife with nuanced personalities, divergent cultures, and an uncommon language. In place of reason alone, which typically pervades DoD decision-making, he argued that emotional connectedness through shared perceptions tends to bridge the cultural and professional JIIM gaps.

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49 Dawn Radice-Neumann, Barbra Zupan, Machiko Tomita, and Barry Willer, "Training Emotional Processing in Persons with Brain Injury," *The Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation* 24, no. 5 (2009): 313–323, and Cristina Bornhofen and Skye McDonald, "Comparing Strategies for Treating Emotion Perception Deficits in Traumatic Brain Injury," *The Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation* 23, no. 2 (2008): 103–115.

50 News Staff, "Learning Emotions After A Brain Injury," Science 2.0 Blog, entry posted November 20, 2008, [http://www.science20.com/news\\_releases/learning\\_emotions\\_again\\_after\\_brain\\_injury](http://www.science20.com/news_releases/learning_emotions_again_after_brain_injury) (accessed March 17, 2013).

<sup>51</sup> Michael K. Nagata, Group Video Teleconference, February 26, 2013.



Although MG Nagata's observation points to the importance of EI, it also reflects recognition of the need to achieve synthesis and balance of emotion and cognition. Or as Silvan Tomkins notes, "out of the marriage of reason with affect there issues clarity with passion. Reason without affect would be impotent, affect with reason would be blind."<sup>52</sup>

Given most Americans' bias toward cognitive abilities, the addition of emotion into the cognitive mix represents a fervent call to arms to acknowledge and pursue competencies such as perception and management of emotions in self and others. For a SOF operator, the challenge to understand one's operational environment begins with knowing oneself. Reportedly etched into the wall of the oracle's temple in Delphi, the maxim to *know thyself* is now written upon the hearts and minds of every SOF operator. Where the real challenge lies is in developing a personal and professional culture that prioritizes introspection and analysis. To know oneself is a task worth mastering by every resilient operator faced with thickening the Global SOF Network.

#### **D. THE RESILIENT OPERATOR: CORNERSTONE OF MISSION PERFORMANCE**

The Special Forces Regiment has sustained unparalleled levels of high operational tempo since 2001, requiring more from its warriors and professionals than has ever been asked before. Recognizing the pressure and strain on the force, USSOCOM is aggressively implementing programs, such as the Tactical Human Optimization Rapid Rehabilitation Reconditioning (THOR3) Program, to maximize the performance and resiliency of its operators. Admiral McRaven, in his posture statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 5, 2013, noted that "through human performance improvement, readiness, and spiritual growth, we hope to preserve our forces for the duration of their careers."<sup>53</sup> This relatively vague statement could be taken to refer to numerous developed and developing programs, educational initiatives, and organizational

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<sup>52</sup> Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect, Imagery, and Consciousness: The Complete Edition* (New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, 2008): 63, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/nps/docDetail.action?docID=10265325> (accessed September 10, 2013).

<sup>53</sup> William H. McRaven, "Posture Statement before Senate Armed Service Committee," (March 5, 2013): 10, [http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2013\\_hr/030513mcraven.pdf](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2013_hr/030513mcraven.pdf) (accessed May 14, 2013).

shifts designed to address the complex demands of the security environment of tomorrow and beyond. Consequently, as has been noted, this environment will increasingly require a synchronized response built from well-developed JIIM relationships. As the SOF network grows, placing Special Forces operators into new organizations and cultures, the link between building effective relationships and mission performance becomes all the more important. This current and future reality should inspire the Regiment to turn its attention to the important and fundamental function of EI, and the need to develop relevant and realistic training to enhance individual and collective relationship-building capabilities.

Although having high emotional intelligence equips an individual to master the ability to effectively relate well to others, it is not the only variable required to build lasting, self-sacrificing partnerships. Skills and abilities related to EI must be coupled with a genuine care and respect for potential partners, based not on serving self, as are many U.S.-dominated defense relationships. By serving the respective security interests of JIIM partners, Special Forces operators stand the best chance to develop authentic friendships that inevitably produce willingness in partners to participate in collective initiatives. Humility is an additional quality that, like tenderness, is seldom discussed within our ranks. In addition to genuine care, it is a critical characteristic required to climb the “4 Cs” ladder to partnership. Synchronizing and sustaining the Global SOF Network requires Communication, Coordination, Collaboration, and Consolidation. As operators and units ascend this hierarchy, the likelihood of a DoD lead in any initiative should decrease, but that requires a full measure of humility on the part of SOF operators to maintain and enhance relationships. Thus, while the skills associated with EI are necessary to build better relationships, only when they are paired with genuine care and humility does the combination become truly potent.

Enhanced relationships ensure increased mission performance, but are not necessarily sufficient to ensure mission success. It would be foolish to suggest that developing higher levels of EI throughout the Special Forces community would lead to guaranteed mission success. Just as current EI academics implore future researchers to develop models that integrate cognitive intelligence, EI, and the BFF, recognizing their

parallel and iterative effect on one another, so too must we acknowledge the other variables required to successfully accomplish mission objectives.<sup>54</sup> Tangibles such as tactical and technical capability, and available resources, combined with intangibles such as leadership, unit cohesion, and morale, fill in the gaps between improved mission performance and mission success. The variable of leadership in particular tends to merge discrete and collective characteristics, suggesting a truly holistic phenomenon that enables mission success. Considering the strong connection between the skills and abilities of EI and leadership, exemplified by the proliferation of countless self-help volumes devoted to this topic, it is important to comment on why this thesis will focus on EI and not leadership.

#### **E. LEADERLESS FRIENDSHIPS: WHY LEADERSHIP IS NEITHER NECESSARY NOR SUFFICIENT**

As this thesis is germane to the DoD, specifically to the Special Forces Regiment, it is essential to point out that the Army is currently conducting research on emotional management and its impact on leadership. Emotional management, the fourth branch of the Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso construct, represents the most complex segment of emotional intelligence. Army-sponsored researchers conceived a theoretical model of emotional management that highlights six components of leader knowledge, behaviors, and competencies.<sup>55</sup> Although this model describes how to incorporate emotions into a more comprehensive model of leadership, it does not discretely apply to developing relationships with individuals from different cultures (JIIM). The gap, therefore, warrants continued exploration for the role EI may play in assisting the SF Regiment to develop the long, loyal, and self-sacrificing *foreign* partnerships required to address our nation's needs throughout the 21st century.

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<sup>54</sup> O'Boyle, et al., "The Relation Between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance," 808.

<sup>55</sup> Shipman, et al., *A Model of Emotion Management*; Kaplan et al., *Emotions at Work*. The three primary components are emotion knowledge, emotion skill, and emotion-relevant leader performance, all of which the study concludes are trainable. The three components less suitable to incorporate into training are specifically related to emotion management, and consists of individual differences, training transfer enablers (organizational culture, group climate, and individual leader and Soldier attitudes), and sources of friction (social complexity, uncertainty, stress and conflict, personal relevance, and followership).

As the Army begins officially to incorporate emotions into a management model for leaders, it is important to distinguish why leadership, though critical in its own regard, is not necessary or sufficient to build effective and reliable relationships. Countless examples exist of leaderless friendships, such as the bonds shared among siblings, the nurturing relationship of husband and wife, the inter-dependability experienced on professional and amateur athletic teams, or the camaraderie of two Soldiers sharing a lonely foxhole. Although a transformational leader who demonstrates high levels of EI may help facilitate the accomplishment of common goals or pursuits, his or her presence is unnecessary to maintain or enhance the collective trust and respect that represents the core of these or other kinds of friendship.<sup>56</sup> The essence of a relationship instead stems from an individual's ability to speak to the heart of another. Heart issues are emotion laden; to navigate them adeptly requires a synthesis of cognitive and emotional intelligence. When paired with mutual respect expressed through empathy, the synthesis results in the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of reliable friendships. As will be described in the next chapter, the OSS Assessment Staff also recognized that leadership was not the most essential quality required to knit together the partisan networks of World War II.

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<sup>56</sup> Daus and Ashkanasy, "The Case for the Ability-Based Model;" Brown and Moshavi, "Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence."

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## IV. ASSESSING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

What we call wisdom is the result of all the wisdom of past ages. Our best institutions are like young trees growing upon the roots of the old trunks that have crumbled away.<sup>57</sup>

### A. REDISCOVERING OUR ROOTS

People have a tendency to idealize the past while lamenting the present, or remain hopeful in the newness of the present while ignoring the lessons of the past. The reality, however, is firmly established in the balance of both: recognizing the wisdom of the past and applying it to benefit the circumstances of the present. As the tide of war in Afghanistan ebbs, and as the special operations community shifts its focus toward building a global network of willing and capable partners to protect U.S. national interests, an intentional period of reflection and projection is necessary to fuse the lessons learned in the past to the challenges of the present and future. Maintaining an unbroken organizational narrative through the disciplined adherence to the five SOF truths will dispel the likelihood of succumbing to community-wide amnesia during this time of transition:

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SOF Truths

  - Humans are more important than hardware
  - Quality is better than quantity
  - Special operations forces cannot be mass produced
  - Competent special operations forces cannot be created after emergencies occur
  - Most special operations require non-SOF support

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Indicative of SOF's orientation, each truth centers on the community's greatest asset—its people. And although the Special Forces' mission has morphed over the last 61 years, its focus and priority on people has not. Tracing the Special Forces' lineage to the OSS connects the branch to the primary root, anchoring any careful analysis of the

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<sup>57</sup> Henry Ward Beecher, <http://izquotes.com/quote/14643> (accessed September 5, 2013).

present in the firm ground of the past. Although our imaginations are often captured by the novelty of the present, one can easily recognize the wisdom in the writer of Ecclesiastes' observation that "what has been will be again; there is nothing new under the sun."<sup>58</sup> In the special operations realm, although missions and priorities change, the fundamental composition of the units tasked to execute them remains the same; the men and women of SOF form the essential building blocks of U.S. national policy in action. Well assessed, selected, assigned, trained and equipped, they serve, as Aaron Banks described them, as "the best ambassadors we have" to a shrinking world in conflict.<sup>59</sup> But what sort of men and women were capable of winning the shadow wars of World War II, and are the individuals required today to prevent, shape, and win cut from the same cloth?

The mark of the quiet professional, whether today's Green Beret or yesteryear's OSS operative, is easily recognizable, difficult to describe, and nearly impossible to define. However, recognizing that no one single quality is necessary or sufficient on its own to meet demanding special operations requirements, there is a particular competency central to them all. Referred to as "that added dimension,"<sup>60</sup> model special operations personnel maintain high quotients of EI, equipping them with the skills and abilities necessary to maintain themselves and the critical relationships with other partners essential to accomplishing their mission. Although EI is a relatively new concept, the OSS assessment staff recognized its major components more than fifty years before its scientific emergence and validation. Retracing the OSS assessment staff's thoughts, analyses, and conclusions, as well as reviewing their assessment methodology, will illuminate EI's significance and serve to further our collective understanding of the concept, and ultimately the need for its continued development and inclusion in the Special Forces community today.

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<sup>58</sup> Ecclesiastes 1:9 (New International Version).

<sup>59</sup> John M. Glenn, "Interview: Father of the Green Berets," *Military History* 14, no. 6 (February 1998): 56, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/212596942/fulltextPDF?accountid=12702> (accessed September 2, 2013).

<sup>60</sup> Robin W. Winks, *Cloak & Gown: Scholars in the Secret War 1939–1961*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 5.

In many ways, the major takeaway from the science supporting EI is the importance of the collective whole. Because EI serves as a measure of one's ability to "persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's mood and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope," it can buttress cognitive intelligence, but should still be considered separate.<sup>61</sup> These indispensable abilities are evaluable, as the OSS assessment team and today's three primary emotional intelligence constructs demonstrate, and the skills are trainable, as neuropsychology suggests. What remains is to determine whether the OSS developed suitable situational environments in which to evaluate candidates' EI, and whether selected personnel received the kind of training that further enhanced their EI quotients.

## **B. OSS ASSESSMENT: IDENTIFYING THE "RIGHT STUFF"**

Forged in the fires of World War II, the OSS (originally the Coordinator of Information) provided the United States with an organization authorized and capable of "collect[ing] and analyz[ing] all information and data, which may bear upon national security . . . and to carry out, when requested by the President, such supplementary activities as may facilitate the securing of information important for national security."<sup>62</sup> William Donovan, the organization's first director, envisioned a war plan detailing "a soften-up process to pave the way for the regular armed forces, consisting broadly of three phases: first, secret intelligence infiltration and preparation; second, sabotage and subversive harassing tactics; and third, resistance groups and guerrilla or commando operations."<sup>63</sup> Critically necessary to each of these three phases was the assessment and selection of the right personnel, and their assignment to the right mission(s). Interestingly, Donovan's OSS became an integrative organization capable of far reaching and strategic effects—a capability other nations preferred to isolate in separate agencies.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 34.

<sup>62</sup> Kermit Roosevelt, *War Report of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services)* (New York, NY: Walker Publishing Company, Inc. 1976), 8.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>64</sup> Roosevelt, *War Report*, 16.



From the beginning, well before the creation of Station S (OSS's primary assessment facility), the OSS recruited heavily from Ivy League schools, law firms, and major corporations for their talent. It sought individuals with an "unfettered sense of curiosity,"<sup>65</sup> optimists and idealists warmed by the courage and heroism of marginalized people suffering under tyrannical rule,<sup>66</sup> and poets—though some may argue that pretenders would be a more accurate name—who were capable of developing cover stories through "hidden networks of voices, identities, codes, and operations."<sup>67</sup> The OSS recruited a broad variety of men and women characterized by out of the box thinking distinguished by boldness and decisiveness,<sup>68</sup> as well as individuals possessing superior mental and psychological standards of uncommon stability, judgment, and independent thinking.<sup>69</sup> These individuals were also free from disturbing prejudices<sup>70</sup> and were perceptive, persuasive, and assertive when necessary, as well as diplomatic.<sup>71</sup>

All of these qualities mirror those inherent in the concept and constructs of emotional intelligence, and collectively—with adequate cognitive and physical competencies—represent the quintessential "whole of man" personality. Ultimately, the man or woman OSS sought "was a secure, capable, intelligent and creative person who could deal effectively with uncertainty and considerable stress."<sup>72</sup> As Donovan offered, "I'd rather have a young lieutenant with guts enough to disobey an order than a colonel

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<sup>65</sup> Winks, *Cloak & Gown*, 54.

<sup>66</sup> Richard Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972), 29.

<sup>67</sup> Mark David Kaufman, "A Hermeneutics of Recruitment: The Case of Wordsworth," *Biography* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 279, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/903528325/fulltextPDF?accountid=12702> (accessed September 6, 2013).

<sup>68</sup> Patrick K. O'Donnell, *Operatives, Spies, and Saboteurs: The Unknown Story of the Men and Women of World War II's OSS* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2004), xvi.

<sup>69</sup> John Whiteclay Chambers II, "Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II," *Studies in Intelligence* 54, no. 2 (June 2010), 9, <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol.-54-no.-2/pdfs-vol.-54-no.-2/Chambers-OSS%20Training%20in%20WWII-with%20notes-web-19Jun.pdf> (accessed September 6, 2013).

<sup>70</sup> Smith, *OSS*, 29.

<sup>71</sup> Will Irwin, *The Jedburghs: The Secret History of the Allied Special Forces, France 1944* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2005), 40.

<sup>72</sup> Irwin, *The Jedburghs*, 11.

too regimented to think and act for himself.”<sup>73</sup> These attributes encouraged a certain disposition toward personal humility and equality among the ranks, encouraging officers and enlisted personnel to relate more as peers.<sup>74</sup>

Indeed, the following excerpt is from a letter received by the OSS assessment staff communicating the importance of selecting individuals with higher and more complementary cognitive and emotion quotients:

The organization has been recruiting too many men who have intelligence and the necessary mechanical training but who lack common sense, know nothing about working with men or how to look after the welfare and the morale of the men under them. We simply must have men who can shoulder responsibility and use initiative with common sense. Simply because a man has intelligence does not qualify him for this type of work. In some instances we also have had men who fall into the class of high-strung or emotional type. We simply cannot use men of that type in the field when they have to live with Chinese, eat Chinese food, and be under pressure at times. In most cases these men have suffered nervous breakdowns and other nervous ailments.<sup>75</sup>

It is clear from this letter, that members of the assessment staff believed that effective action proceeds from an adequate composite intelligence. Recruits had to possess sufficient cognitive and emotive capabilities to survive and flourish on the battlefield. Reflecting on the necessary traits and abilities of Jedburgh recruits, Will Irwin likewise notes that “mental stamina was no less important than physical endurance; and maturity, emotional stability, and self-discipline would be needed for the men to hold up under stressful situations or during periods of prolonged isolation.”<sup>76</sup>

Meanwhile, some skills are easier to evaluate than others, complicating the design and implementation of any assessment program. Provided with only general guidance from Donovan, and in light of the gravity of World War II, the OSS assessment staff

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<sup>73</sup> Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training,” 4.

<sup>74</sup> Richard Helms and William Hood, *A Look Over My Shoulder: A Life in the Central Intelligence Agency* (New York, NY: Random House, 2003), 49.

<sup>75</sup> Leonard Handler, “Assessment of Men: Personality Assessment Goes to War by the Office of Strategic Services Assessment Staff,” *Journal of Personality Assessment* 76, no. 3 (2001): 560, <http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.nps.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=2791d2d9-9ad8-473f-bd20-a7809bf7de94%40sessionmgr115&vid=2&hid=117> (accessed September 3, 2013).

<sup>76</sup> Irwin, *The Jedburghs*, 40.

understood that the task set before them required a new methodology, one that had never been attempted before in the United States.<sup>77</sup> What they ended up developing was a multiform organismic system of assessment. “Multiform because it consists of a rather large number of procedures based on different principles, and organismic (or *Gestalt*, or holistic) because it utilized the data obtained through these procedures for attempting to arrive at a picture of personality as a whole.”<sup>78</sup> “Personality as a whole” refers to clusters of general qualifications (attributes, traits, skills, etc.). Although, in theory, assessing personality sounds relatively simple, the inconsistent nature of man makes it very difficult. The OSS assessment staff agreed with the notion that “universal human experience teaches us that it is emotional, intellectual, and conative energy directed toward a defined purpose which organizes the psychological processes into a temporal whole.”<sup>79</sup> They thus forged ahead in an experimental fashion, designing situational environments capable of inducing a broad spectrum of behaviors.

Incidentally, despite the difficulty of developing a new evaluation methodology, the OSS assessment staff also faced numerous other obstacles, three of which were unique to the design and implementation phase. First, they were tasked to assess a wide variety of jobs, which meant they had prospective financial officers, instructors and leaders of guerrilla units, and propaganda script writers and actors all together in a single assessment class, without knowing who was destined for which unit or mission.<sup>80</sup> This forced staff members to evaluate broader characteristics, rather than being able to assess a particular candidate against a narrower set of needed qualities. Second, they lacked accurate descriptions of potential jobs, since the few agents and operators who were already operational—those who were employed by the OSS prior to the assessment program launching in January 1944—lacked sufficient experience to be authoritative when describing their roles or what was required to succeed in their operational

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<sup>77</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men: Selection of Personnel for the Office of Strategic Services* (New York, NY: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1948), 3.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

environments.<sup>81</sup> And third, the staff found itself unable to create standardized tests to evaluate special skills, such as those required for policy-making, calculating enemy vulnerabilities, practicing tropical medicine, running a linotype machine, or drawing Japanese propaganda posters.<sup>82</sup> These special aptitudes were left to candidates' branch administrative officers to evaluate based on a subjective review of a candidate's job history and self-reporting.

Despite these impediments, the assessment staff concluded that the "success or failure of a stressful secret mission would probably depend in large part on the candidate's ability to cooperate and get along with others and to lead others in a harmonious and productive manner."<sup>83</sup> Staff members postulated the critical importance of seven distinct variables, three of which lie at the heart of EI and appear in italics: motivation for assignment, energy and initiative, effective intelligence, *emotional stability*, *social relations*, *leadership*, and security.<sup>84</sup> While still recognizing the need for cognitive capability, the assessment staff focused primarily on psychological factors of personality and on one variable in particular: emotional stability.<sup>85</sup> Staff members concluded that "from first to last, the problem of emotional stability was a central issue in assessment, a vastly important consideration in predicting a candidate's overall effectiveness in the field. It was the variable of personality most subject to change, and if changed for the worse, it could vitiate all the other skills of a candidate."<sup>86</sup>

The OSS's recognition of the critical role emotions play in one's overall ability to relate effectively to one's environment serves as a reminder that what is most important is often unseen and unexpressed, and, therefore, problematic to evaluate. As one OSS assessment staff member put it, "for many jobs, personality factors are quite as important as is mental keenness or trade skills. But bravery, calmness under heckling, ability to

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<sup>81</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 11–12.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>83</sup> Handler, "Assessment of Men," 559.

<sup>84</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 30.

<sup>85</sup> Chambers, "Offices of Strategic Services Training," 11.

<sup>86</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 281–282.

control temper, facility in persuading a group to take some action, are much more difficult to assess.”<sup>87</sup> Ultimately, the OSS staff faced the problem of being able to predict human behavior in novel and complex environments, and chose to rely on analyzing those variables it considered most indicative of the whole.

### C. ASSESSING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE OSS

As mentioned previously, the OSS assessment staff employed a multiform organismic methodology to effectively evaluate personality as a whole. Inherent to this methodology is the fundamental fact that behavior of the highest order depends on two distinct abilities: “(1) the individual’s ability to perceive and interpret properly the whole situation that confronts them [sic] and (2) his ability to coordinate his acts and direct them in proper sequence toward the proper objects.”<sup>88</sup> If one compares this to Mayer and Salovey’s construct, the two necessary abilities of the organismic methodology mirror all four branches of the EI model: 1) perception of emotion, 2) integration and assimilation of emotion, 3) knowledge about emotions, and 4) management of emotions. Specifically, the ability to perceive and integrate emotions into thought and action, coupled with knowledge of the emotions and their impacts, is critical to knowing one’s operational environment. Likewise, effective management of emotions encourages proper sequencing and orientation.

On reflection, the OSS staff acknowledged that trained experts—psychologists and psychiatrists, not technical/mechanical instruments—were necessary, because elementalistic tests, such as IQ, were simply insufficient.<sup>89</sup> Staff members further recognized the “necessity of relating all observations to each other, not in a mechanical way, but by an interpretive process aiming at the discovery of general patterns and action

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<sup>87</sup> Marjorie Van de Water, “Selecting Secret Agents,” *The Science News-Letter* 49, no. 2 (January 12, 1946): 26, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3922783> (accessed September 6, 2013).

<sup>88</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 39.

<sup>89</sup> The elementalistic approach calls for breaking down a proposed function into its component operations and then the invention and standardization of one or more tests for each operation. For a more detailed explanation and comparison of the organismic and elementalistic approaches, see Chapter II, “Principles of Assessment,” in *Assessment of Men*.

systems.”<sup>90</sup> In this way, the OSS staff argued that the organismic methodology accomplished everything the elementalistic approach did, but it added the benefit of supplementary procedures and the tentative interpretation of results, thereby more fully articulating a predictive representation of personality as a whole.<sup>91</sup> Cleverly, the staff opted to administer the elementalistic tests—a personal history form, two intelligence tests, a sentence completion test, and a work conditions questionnaire—assessing the more overt layers of personality first, and reserving the supplemental tests designed to tap the deeper dispositions until the candidate’s general defenses were lowered.<sup>92</sup>

For instance, the staff used the sentence completion and projective questionnaire to incrementally encourage candidates to descend deeper into their own personality. The sentence completion test included benign topics such as family history and preferred hobbies and activities, but it also addressed topics such as “inner states: the subject’s feelings and attitudes toward himself; . . . reaction to frustration and failure; . . . optimism-pessimism: expectations of success and failure; . . . and reaction of others: what, according to the subject, his friends think of him.”<sup>93</sup> In so doing, the sentence completion test, which was interpreted, not scored, provided unique insight into the candidate’s emotional intelligence. Similarly, the projective questionnaire shed light on the “candidate’s emotional life, something of his most impressive experiences, something of his attitudes and sentiments.”<sup>94</sup> Each question was carefully chosen based on scientific theory, and answers were again interpreted, not scored, as were those of other elementalistic tests. Some of the most telling responses included “such frank answers as, ‘Loneliness for parents,’ ‘Thinking perhaps there’s something I have missed in life or failed to do,’ ‘Feeling sorry for myself,’ or ‘Having someone dislike me.’”<sup>95</sup> Because the subjective and interpretive organismic methodology requires candidates to respond as

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<sup>90</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 53.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>95</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 91.

genuinely as possible, these preliminary tests placed candidates in a more reflective and natural state, which decreased their guardedness, and resulted in most expressing their authentic selves during the remaining situational tests. Convinced that students were sufficiently authentic, the OSS assessment staff proceeded with administering a battery of tests created to specifically test one or more of the seven principle variables.

### **1. Emotional Stability**

At the time, the OSS assessment staff defined emotional stability as the “ability to govern disturbing emotions, steadiness and endurance under pressure, snafu tolerance, freedom from neurotic tendencies.”<sup>96</sup> Unlike proponents of emotional intelligence today, who take into account the management and regulation of both positive and negative emotions, the OSS staff conceived of emotional stability as individuals’ ability to govern only negative emotions. Specifically, the staff viewed emotional stability through two lenses: “(1) Do undesirable emotions occur frequently and intensely? (2) If such emotions do occur, can they be held in check or canalized in desirable directions?”<sup>97</sup> Although numerous tests provided opportunities to evaluate a candidate’s emotional stability, three in particular generated the most observable traits.

The Construction Test was designed specifically “to test the reactions of the candidate to ‘snafu,’ to belittling and insulting remarks, and in addition to provide some indication of his ability to manage recalcitrant, irritating, and stupid subordinates.”<sup>98</sup> The test replicated a construction site and assigned the candidate to be the lead foreman and manager of two workers. The candidate was not able to directly assist in the construction project, but was encouraged to provide instruction to the two laborers. “This innocent-looking task was made positively impossible because the ‘helpers’ were actually staff members (stooges) dressed as candidates, whose job it was to frustrate the completion of the building by various destructive and passive-aggressive maneuvers.”<sup>99</sup> One

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 285.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 291.

<sup>99</sup> Handler, “Assessment of Men,” 568.

recognizes the true intent and power of the test given the fact that no candidate was ever able to get the two stooges to properly assemble the structure. Under these circumstances, the best solution from the staff's perspective was for the candidate to attempt to explain what he wished to accomplish, to delegate specific responsibilities, and to closely monitor the stooges' progress (or lack thereof), all while attempting to genuinely care for and respect them as equals and essential team members.<sup>100</sup> The interpersonal skills and abilities hit the EI constructs' principle tenet: one has to understand and control the internal before they can recognize and effectively manage the external.

The second test the OSS assessors used to evaluate emotional stability was the Stress Interview. Candidates were informed that they had twelve minutes to develop a cover story to explain why they were caught looking through files marked SECRET in a government building in Washington. At the end of the twelve minutes they were escorted into the basement of Station S and ushered into a darkened room with one solitary bright light. The interviewer began with some basic pleasantries and then quickly got more intense and personal. The rapidity of the interrogator's questions, accusations, and interruptions increased throughout, placing the candidate in a defensive position and alarmed state. Every effort was made to increase the stress of the situation, from requiring the candidate to sit upright and unfold his or her legs if they were crossed, to using information from the Sentence Completion Test and Projective Questionnaire to personalize the questions. Indications of deficient emotional stability were noted, such as sitting rigidly in the chair, moving restlessly, smoking nervously, stuttering, sweating, exploding in anger, or crying. Positive indicators of good emotional stability, meanwhile, included a poised and calm demeanor, little reaction to shouting (or an insistence that it was unnecessary), attempts to control the interrogation, and even laughing and joking.<sup>101</sup> Candidates capable of maintaining poise in the face of stress clearly displayed self-regulation and management, in accord with Mayer and Salovey's fourth branch of EI.

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<sup>100</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 110.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 136–137.



The final source of emotional stability came from the casual and constant observation of candidates in non-test situations. One unique aspect of the OSS process was that the staff and students lived together. This non-threatening environment created unparalleled access to candidates' natural tendencies. The fact that the students had to create cover stories and assume alternative identities, as well as wear insignia-free uniforms throughout the assessment, enabled each candidate to essentially establish his or her own social role based on the anonymity within the community. Often, these roles were reflective of candidates' true personalities, which their real-world roles may have masked. Most illuminating were staff observations of candidates' tolerant and forbearing natures.<sup>102</sup> These two traits—tolerance and forbearance, often associated with patience and empathy—reflect high measures of EI and maturity.

## **2. Social Relations**

Although staff members encountered only a few minor difficulties while evaluating emotional stability, they faced two serious dilemmas when it came to the question of social relations. As defined by the assessment staff, “social relations” refer to the “ability to get along well with other people, good will, team play, tact, freedom from disturbing prejudices, freedom from annoying traits.”<sup>103</sup> Despite the international make-up of prospective units to which candidates would be sent, the staff was unable to create cross-culturally nuanced experimental tests.<sup>104</sup> Second, the three-day long assessment made it impossible for the staff to estimate how a candidate might fare over time. As the staff noted, “Some people are appealing on first acquaintance and can maintain for three or more days, if necessary, an agreeable social ‘front,’ but, as time goes on, their annoying characteristics emerge.”<sup>105</sup> Side-stepping the issue of time as they tried to evaluate the presence or absence of the twenty-some traits associated with prosocial relations, staff members opted to consider the probable effect a candidate might have on

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<sup>102</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men* 293.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 296. This problem continues to plague Special Forces today.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

the morale of his assigned unit. One question governed their assessment: “Is he the kind of man whom others will want as a member of their group?”<sup>106</sup>

As with emotional stability, the staff created a number of tests to specifically evaluate social relations ability, and of special note are subsequent studies that examined the staff’s effectiveness at determining social relations. The first study compared the staff’s evaluations with field commander and branch chief recommendations for selection and assignment to operational units. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 corresponding with low social relations ability and 5 relating to high social relations ability, the staff predicted with almost 100% accuracy those to whom they gave ratings of 4 and 5. Likewise, those the staff gave ratings of 0s and 1s were almost never recommended for service by commanders and branch chiefs. As is to be expected, those rated as 2s and 3s received mixed recommendations for service.<sup>107</sup>

The second study, conducted in the aftermath of World War II, foreshadows research being done today on how one’s family life affects emotional intelligence and social relations.<sup>108</sup> “An analysis of the personality sketches of fifty subjects who had received extreme ratings of Social Relations revealed a tendency for high rankings to be associated with a happy, affectionate childhood situation, and low scores with an unhappy, insecure childhood.”<sup>109</sup> What this OSS observation suggests is that family life is the first school for emotional learning. “In this intimate cauldron we learn how to feel about ourselves and how others will react to our feelings; how to think about these feelings and what choices we have in reacting; how to read and express hopes and

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<sup>106</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 295.

<sup>107</sup> Although the high capacity to create and maintain social relations is a necessary but not sufficient quality for special operations personnel, it closely correlates with the collective competencies that are sufficient. The key takeaway is that humans are relational beings, wired to interact and develop in a community. Individual’s ability to preserve relationships throughout the mission, and perhaps even recognize that the maintenance of relationships is the mission, is a much needed competence for SOF personnel.

<sup>108</sup> Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*, 419–466; Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 305–309; and Jennifer Kahn, “Can Emotional Intelligence Be Taught,” *The New York Times*, September 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/magazine/can-emotional-intelligence-be-taught.html> (accessed September 12, 2013).

<sup>109</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 300.

fears.”<sup>110</sup> In terms of emotional intelligence, the OSS assessment staff unwittingly identified the critical significance of the home environment. And although staff members could not do anything to change the fundamental effects of upbringing, their intuition regarding its significance stands.

### **3. Leadership**

Leadership is the third critical competence to be discussed here. Interestingly, OSS descriptions of the most effective leaders rarely include traits that overlap with emotional stability or social relations. Positive descriptions by OSS staff and students (on peer evaluation reports) listed traits such as “self-confidence, common sense, originality, assertiveness, cheerfulness, tact, persistence, and a desire to excel.”<sup>111</sup> In contrast, almost every description of a bad leader included the negative or inverse traits of good emotional stability and social relations, such as “readiness for anger, conceit, introversion, selfishness, depressive moods, confusion, indecision, excitability, and impulsiveness.”<sup>112</sup>

The OSS assessment staff defined leadership as “man’s ability to take the initiative in social situations, to plan and organize action, and in so doing to evoke cooperation.”<sup>113</sup> Ironically, emotion is clearly absent in the OSS definition, although it is the central component of some of today’s champions of leadership. For instance, Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee suggest that the emotional task of the leader is primal. They argue that “throughout history and in cultures everywhere, the leader in any human group has been the one to whom others look for assurance and clarity when facing uncertainty or threat, or when there’s a job to be done. The leader acts as the group’s emotional guide.”<sup>114</sup> In reality, it is likely that the OSS staff may have been correct in assessing that “the effective leader did not need to be outstanding in these

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<sup>110</sup> Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 189–190.

<sup>111</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 306.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 301.

<sup>114</sup> Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*, 5.

other traits [emotional stability and social relations], but, on the other hand, that he was not apt to be strikingly deficient in them.”<sup>115</sup> Perhaps this helps explain why the Army’s ongoing research, to include studying emotional management in leadership, veers away from EI.<sup>116</sup> The Army seems to recognize, much as the OSS assessment staff did more than seventy years ago, that not all who exude emotional intelligence are great leaders, but that all leaders need to maintain an acceptable proficiency in EI.

Arguably, great leaders are masters of both the cognitive and emotional components of leadership. Cognitive abilities, such as having a clarifying vision, projecting values, developing strategy, and setting goals, are essential to good leadership. But what then separates the proficient from the truly exceptional are the emotional traits, which involve “facing the unknown with courage and confidence, inspiring and challenging people to do their best, and mobilizing human energy. It’s about channeling anxiety into productive action while remaining responsive to the inevitable twists and turns that appear unexpectedly.”<sup>117</sup>

The OSS assessment staff established that the ability to manage oneself and relate to others is critical to being able to accomplish the mission—a mission focused more on relationship building and networking than on decisive leadership. The sagacity of this decision can be seen in Aaron Banks’s reflections about working with guerrillas. Bank noted that “the guerrillas had their own leaders. If we had tried to take over the operation, we would have been lucky to get out alive. Our job was to help them plan and keep them supplied. But they knew we were there to help them, so they usually did as we advised.”<sup>118</sup> Friendships, such as those that permitted Banks and countless others to advise and assist, were built on trust, which was earned through the intentional pursuit of unity through mutual support. Again, trust consists of two primary components: 1) an

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<sup>115</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 307.

<sup>116</sup> Shipman, et al., *A Model of Emotion Management*; Kaplan, et al., *Emotions at Work*.

<sup>117</sup> Marshal Goldsmith, John Baldoni, and Sarah McArthur, eds., *The AMA Handbook of Leadership* (New York, NY: American Management Association, 2010), 168.

<sup>118</sup> Glenn, “Interview,” 53.

emotional response based on 2) a performance track record.<sup>119</sup> Together, these components develop confidence between individuals, within teams, and throughout organizations. Meanwhile, one way to develop these components is through training.

#### **D. FAILURE TO TRAIN EI IN THE OSS**

Once assessed and selected as members of the OSS, operatives entered an intensive training program meant to prepare them for the arduous tasks that lay ahead. Considering the significance of emotional stability together with the importance of social relations and leadership, one would expect OSS training schools to include modules on enhancing and utilizing these critical skills. Regrettably, no such comprehensive program existed. For example, the 250 hour-long stateside preliminary training for OSS operatives assigned to operational groups did not include even one hour on a topic as critical as working with indigenous personnel.<sup>120</sup> In fact, the only training operatives received that loosely related to the enhancement or utilization of emotional intelligence was an abbreviated, advanced school on sabotage and guerrilla warfare. Dubbed the Localized Social School, “agents were instructed in elementary principles of social control and their applicability to control the local population.”<sup>121</sup> In after-action reports, operatives complained that “there had not been enough instruction in how to organize and work with indigenous populations, especially non-European, native populations. Nor was there enough training on how to handle resistance groups, particularly those with diverse factions and conflicting political agendas.”<sup>122</sup>

Despite this lack of training, leaders of the OSS and the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) understood the importance of “fit.” In creating the small Jedburgh teams responsible for conducting fifth column activities behind enemy lines in France, Holland, and Belgium on or after D-Day, OSS and SOE leaders instructed the “Jeds” to “begin seeking out their own teammates—men with whom they felt they could

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<sup>119</sup> Rehfeld, “Organizational Trust,” 67.

<sup>120</sup> Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training,” 10.

<sup>121</sup> Roosevelt, *War Report*, 81.

<sup>122</sup> Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training,” 15.

work best in the field. To operate effectively, the men making up a team had to be physically, emotionally, and temperamentally compatible—matched like a team of horses in harness.”<sup>123</sup> Such an implied acceptance of the importance of EI was further reflected in the development and execution of a reassessment program for OSS personnel to determine their fitness for further assignment. “Particular emphasis was placed upon the possibility of nervous tensions resulting from war experience.”<sup>124</sup> For instance, operatives suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders or traumatic brain injuries were dismissed from duty regardless of their cognitive competencies. This reaffirms EI’s prominence in an operator’s ability to accomplish the mission.

#### **E. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: THE FOUNDATION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXCELLENCE**

The OSS assessors clearly regarded the emotional component of man as critical. Their inventive multiform organismic methodology, coupled with their creative formulation of situational tests, established a program capable of effectively evaluating the whole man. Despite the physical and technical intensity of the training program, “as a postwar report put it, ‘the major goal was psychological—to develop in the student-agent an attitude of mind which would respond to an emergency in accordance with the exigencies of the particular situation.’”<sup>125</sup> By stressing psychological affect from the moment of a candidate’s initial assessment through his or her employment, the OSS proved able to predict with a high degree of certainty the behavior of its operatives, spies, and saboteurs. Equipped with higher than average quotients of EI, most men and women in the OSS successfully built and sustained critical partnerships with foreign nationals, creating broad networks of influence capable of setting the theaters of World War II ablaze. Of particular note, the most effective OSS partnerships were often described as

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<sup>123</sup> Irwin, *The Jedburghs*, 64.

<sup>124</sup> Roosevelt, *War Report*, 239.

<sup>125</sup> Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training,” 17.

authentic friendships. These friendships were distinguished by displays of patience and mutual respect, and the willingness to persevere—all indicators of EI.<sup>126</sup>

Although the OSS's successes and failures provide countless lessons for the special operations community today, perhaps no greater principle exists than this: select the right individuals and assign them to the right missions.<sup>127</sup> The OSS assessment and training staff created a psychologically focused program that served as the essential refining fire, capable of separating the dross from the worthwhile specimen. Assessed as emotionally stable, cognitively agile, and physically fit, the OSS candidates-turned-operatives proved the assessment staff's initial hypothesis to be correct: that a high "personality as a whole" score was the trait most necessary and sufficient for mission success. Unlike many of their contemporaries, members of the OSS assessment staff strayed away from focusing solely on cognitive capabilities, leaning more toward emotional competencies as key indicators of "fit." Today, as the Special Forces community rediscovers its historical roots and looks ahead to the challenges of building a Global SOF Network, perhaps it too should lean toward EI as a central predictor of future performance.

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<sup>126</sup> Ian Sutherland, "The OSS Operational Groups: Origin of the Army Special Force," *Special Warfare* 15, no. 2 (June 2002): 9, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/199354646/fulltextPDF/141DD0B7DB04402E2D3/2?accountid=12702> (accessed September 3, 2013).

<sup>127</sup> David A. Walker, "OSS and Operation Torch," *Journal of Contemporary History* 22, no. 4 (October 1987): 667–679, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/260815> (accessed September 6, 2013). Although this thesis focuses primarily on the assessment of OSS personnel, which is considered a significant success, "OSS and Operation Torch" describes some of the failures of the OSS due in no small part to a lack of emotional intelligence.

## V. 2020: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE GLOBAL SOF NETWORK

The Human Domain cannot be controlled or managed by technical means or capabilities; it requires human contact—person to person interaction—with duration and persistence over time that enables commanders to determine who the enemy is, where the enemy is and what his likely intentions are.<sup>128</sup>

In war, the chief incalculable is the human will.<sup>129</sup>

### A. REVIEWING THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In response to the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, the 2011 National Military Strategy, the 2010 National Security Strategy, the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020*, and the *Global Trends 2030* report, the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) published *SOCOM 2020* and *ARSOF 2022*, respectively. These documents address the security paradox facing the United States and its allies in the wake of over a dozen years of war, and articulate how SOF, and Army SOF in particular, will “provide National Leadership with strategic options for protecting and advancing U.S. national interests.”<sup>130</sup> Specifically, both documents render a vision of what a *globally integrated network* will look like in 2020 and beyond.<sup>131</sup>

Although each outlines increased collaboration built on the social capital of deep relationships, tailored responses to regional issues, small forward footprints, and expanded authorities, as well as highlighting individual and team capabilities such as mastery of interpersonal and social networking skills, language expertise, and expansive cultural understanding, neither document explains how these requisite abilities are

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<sup>128</sup> Robert B Brown and Ronald W. Sprang, “Human Domain: Essential to Victory in Future Operations,” unpublished paper, no date.

<sup>129</sup> Basil Henry Liddel Hart, <http://izquotes.com/quote/80406> (accessed September 5, 2013).

<sup>130</sup> USSOCOM *Operating Concept*, May 2013, ii.  
<http://fortunascorner.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/final-low-res-sof-operating-concept-may-2013.pdf> (accessed May 15, 2013).

<sup>131</sup> *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020*, 10 September 2012.  
[http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JV2020\\_Capstone.pdf](http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JV2020_Capstone.pdf) (accessed October 24, 2013).



guaranteed. Nor do their supporting references. In fact, each document assumes that such expertise already exists within the ranks. Presumably, if that is the case, then other supporting documents such as field manuals or mission essential tasks should provide the details about how operators are trained to reach and maintain such proficient levels. To confirm these assumptions, it is necessary to first conduct a deliberate review of doctrine relevant to the development of the Global SOF Network, the result of which will serve to establish what is expected of SOF in general and Army Special Forces personnel in particular. Furthermore, and having already established EI as a core competency for building partnerships for the Global SOF Network, the balance of this chapter will focus on aspects of doctrine that most pertain to EI.

## **B. SOCOM 2020: LINKING STRATEGY TO CAPABILITY**

In February 2013, USSOCOM produced a white paper on the Global Special Operations Forces Network. It outlined three primary actions essential to establishing and managing the network: provide the Geographic Combatant Commanders improved special operations capacity, build a global network of SOF, and evolve USSOCOM's role as a Functional Combatant Command with global responsibilities.<sup>132</sup> Despite EI's importance in every person-to-person relationship and, therefore, to all three primary actions, the second activity—building the Global SOF Network—is particularly pertinent to this thesis. Specifically, *SOCOM 2020* points out that “success in the future demands unprecedented levels of trust, confidence, and understanding—conditions that can't be surged.”<sup>133</sup> Furthermore, it notes that “true understanding is only gained through human interaction, which requires some form of engagement.”<sup>134</sup>

If one takes Adele Lynn's definition of EI to heart—EI is the ability “to manage ourselves and our relationships with others so that we truly live our intentions”—then the desired end state of the Global SOF Network cannot be hidden from potential like-

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<sup>132</sup> “The Global Special Operations Forces Network,” unpublished paper, February 15, 2013.

<sup>133</sup> *SOCOM 2020*, 1, <http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/SOCOM2020Strategy.pdf> (accessed May 15, 2013).

<sup>134</sup> *USSOCOM Operating Concept*, 6.

mindful partners.<sup>135</sup> Rather, the process and desired end state must be conveyed in a transparent manner and supported through consistent behavior. According to Piotr Sztompka, “trust is the precondition for cooperation, and also the product of successful cooperation.”<sup>136</sup> Or, in system engineering terms, trust exists as both the input and output of effective cooperation, leading to increased social capital and greater interdependence. As SOCOM sends Special Forces personnel into the field to build the Global SOF Network, operators must embody the core tenets of EI to quickly establish trust with potential partners. Of particular importance are the traits and affective states of empathy, patience, and optimism.

As a component of EI, empathy stands apart as integral to all four branches of the Mayer and Salovey model; it builds on self-awareness, facilitates thought, evokes understanding, and assists in management. As one of the most widely written upon attributes of EI, empathy is collectively described as the “fundamental people skill,”<sup>137</sup> and the ability to “tune into the emotional subtext”<sup>138</sup> and to “fully immerse oneself in another’s viewpoint, yet remain wholly apart.”<sup>139</sup> Empathy is an essential element of the communication loop, signaling both listening and connecting.<sup>140</sup> Consequently, empathy is essential in influence operations. Indeed, as Malcolm Gladwell sums up the outside-in nature of emotional contagion: “It is possible to understand how some people can have an enormous amount of influence over others. Some of us, after all, are very good at expressing emotions and feelings, which means that we are far more emotionally

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<sup>135</sup> Lynn, *The EQ Difference*, v.

<sup>136</sup> Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 62.

<sup>137</sup> Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 43.

<sup>138</sup> Weisinger, *Emotional Intelligence at Work*, 153.

<sup>139</sup> Lynn, *The EQ Difference*, 189.

<sup>140</sup> Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict*, 185–191.

contagious than the rest of us.”<sup>141</sup> Emotionally intelligent individuals, often classified psychologically as “senders,” epitomize empathy and influence through personal persuasion and their physical presence.

*SOCOM 2020* avers that “the vast majority of SOF expertise lies in the human domain of competition, conflict, and war. The Human Domain is about developing understanding of, and nurturing influence among, critical populaces.”<sup>142</sup> Without empathy, a Specials Forces operator would struggle to establish common ground, connect with and understand his counterpart, and ultimately influence the relationship. Empathy, like other interpersonal skills and abilities, develops and matures through intentional practice and refinement. Martin Hoffman notes that mature empathy has a metacognitive dimension; that one is aware of empathizing, thus separating the distress for others from distress for self.<sup>143</sup> Hoffman attributes the initial development of empathy to natural proclivities and the nurturing social roles of parents.<sup>144</sup> However, humans’ ability to develop empathy, and, therefore, the skill to connect and influence, is not limited to adolescence. In fact, empathy represents one of the most complex emotional competencies, requiring continual cognitive appraisal to be able to walk “in another’s shoes.”<sup>145</sup> Building the Global SOF Network requires empathic relationships to ensure understanding, encourage trust, and enable influence.

A network perspective itself requires treating relationships as ties and links, symbolically depicting connectivity, influence, and energy. As trust grows over time, the consistency of those bonds thickens, strengthening the network and reinforcing its purpose. *SOCOM 2020* further reminds us that “building trust requires time and commitment. Persistent engagement based on mutual trust and understanding best

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<sup>141</sup> Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company, 2002), 85.

<sup>142</sup> *SOCOM 2020*, 2.

<sup>143</sup> Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett, eds., *Handbook of Emotions*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2008), 440.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 448.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

positions the force to build relationships.”<sup>146</sup> This element of empathy over time underscores the importance of the second vital EI attribute: patience.

Remaining patient in the face of one’s own foibles and others’ shortcomings, as well as towards the slow passage of time, is a cornerstone of special operations with foreign partners. Proverbs 19:11 states that “a person’s wisdom yields patience; it is to one’s glory to overlook an offense.”<sup>147</sup> Wisdom itself is closely associated with discretion, excellence of discernment, penetration of thought, and correctness of opinion, and is reflective of an individual possessing a higher measure and balance of cognitive and emotional intelligence.<sup>148</sup> In addition, patience is closely associated with temperance, one of Plato’s four cardinal virtues.<sup>149</sup> Temperance denotes flexibility and a spirit of compromise, two supplementary characteristics essential for building partnerships within the JIIM environment. As the *SOCOM Operating Concept* notes, the strategy focuses on a slow and deliberate approach that “patiently informs, influences, and shapes the operating environment, thus setting conditions to prevent conflict.”<sup>150</sup> Patience also directly relates to self-control of both impulse and action. But as even the most emotionally intelligent operator working with a capable foreign partner will attest, patience is often in short supply.

Aristotle offers another perspective from which to think about patience. The Aristotelian mean, perhaps best captured in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, suggests that the highest virtue is found in the middle way, forgoing both excess and defect. Aristotle contends that “to feel them [emotions] at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is

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<sup>146</sup> *SOCOM 2020*, 1.

<sup>147</sup> Proverbs 19:11 (New International Version).

<sup>148</sup> Lewis, Haviland-Jones, and Barrett, *Handbook of Emotions*, 423.

<sup>149</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Richard W. Sterling and William C. Scott (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1985), bk. IV, section 427e. Plato relates one of Socrates’ dialogues about finding the light that will illuminate the ideal city, one that would be good in the fullest sense. Socrates suggests that the ideal citizen, and therefore its citizens, would be wise, courageous, temperate, and just.

<sup>150</sup> *USSOCOM Operating Concept*, 4.

both intermediate and best.”<sup>151</sup> Thus, even within philosophy, achieving balance between the power of emotions and cognitive control is recognized as profoundly important. Patience results from one’s ability to appropriately respond through character to a dynamic environment, closely resembling the collective output of Mayer and Salovey’s four branches of EI.

Like patience, optimism is widely discussed in both philosophy and psychology. As the third attribute of emotional intelligence required for thickening the Global SOF Network, optimism is built on the basic belief that we have the ability to impact our circumstances for the better.<sup>152</sup> Optimism is the positive affective state related to confidence and hopefulness.<sup>153</sup> At the same time, it is not blind belief; rather, it is firmly grounded in the conscious appraisal of stimuli. In describing Martin Seligman’s work on learned optimism, Cary Cherniss notes that “optimists tend to make specific, temporary, external causal attributions while pessimists make global, permanent, internal attributions.”<sup>154</sup> Recognizing the temporary nature of circumstances permits optimists to remain hopeful in a better future and committed to a cause. Although the scientific community remains uncertain as to optimism’s true home—whether within the realm of personality or as a measure of emotional intelligence<sup>155</sup>—one thing is certain: it “buffers people against falling into apathy, hopelessness, or depression in the face of tough going.”<sup>156</sup>

Inevitably, SOF will not be able to transform every Global SOF Network relationship into one that is long, loyal, and self-sacrificing. Faced with rejection,

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<sup>151</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross, bk. 2, section 6, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.2.ii.html> (accessed November 29, 2013).

<sup>152</sup> Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 153.

<sup>153</sup> Lewis, Haviland-Jones, and Barrett, *Handbook of Emotions*, 778.

<sup>154</sup> Cary Cherniss, “Emotional Intelligence: What it is and Why it Matters,” Unpublished paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (New Orleans, LA, April 15, 2000), <http://www.talentsmart.com/media/uploads/pdfs/eq-what-it-is.pdf> (accessed December 8, 2013).

<sup>155</sup> Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*, 152, 225, and 476.

<sup>156</sup> Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 88.

disappointment, and failure, optimism encourages operators to keep calm and carry on.<sup>157</sup> Neuroscience and EI literatures describe the left prefrontal cortex as the seat of attention and self-awareness, which functions like a highway for motivation. Specifically, the left prefrontal-based brain circuits

quiet the feelings of frustration or worry that might discourage us from continuing. This means we can take in stride the inevitable setbacks, frustrations, and failures that any worthy goal brings us. We can see the hidden opportunity or the useful lesson in a reversal and keep going.<sup>158</sup>

According to Goleman, these circuits are responsive to cognitive appraisal, which then requires Special Forces personnel to engage in intentional introspective analysis in an effort to rewire through neurogenesis pessimistic tendencies.<sup>159</sup>

Empathy, patience, and optimism are essential to building the Global SOF Network, but they represent only a fraction of the skills, abilities, traits, and affective states of an emotionally intelligent operator. Ironically, military personnel in general lack these specific skills. In his classic cross-cultural examination “Defense is from Mars, State is from Venus,” Rickey Rife suggests that “they [military professionals] are not, generally, empathetic, intuitive listeners. Nor is patience one of their greatest virtues.”<sup>160</sup> Contrary to that assessment, the *USSOCOM Operating Concept* claims that SOF “master the interpersonal and social networking skills, knowledge, and understanding that allow them to operate fluidly within diverse non-Western societies.”<sup>161</sup>

Cross-cultural competence is clearly pertinent to building and enhancing the network. Understanding cultures is inherently an emotional and cognitive pursuit, requiring a disciplined and analytical approach to studying such diverse topics as

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<sup>157</sup> At the beginning of World War II, the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Information published a propaganda poster with the words: “Keep Calm and Carry On.” This mantra reminds us of our own internal dialogues and narratives.

<sup>158</sup> Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*, 41.

<sup>159</sup> Goleman, *The Brain and New Insights*.

<sup>160</sup> Rickey L. Rife, “Defense is from Mars, State is from Venus: Improving Communications and Promoting National Security,” United States War College, 3, <http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/SOCOM2020Strategy.pdf> (accessed August 13, 2013).

<sup>161</sup> *SOCOM 2020*, 10.

historical contexts, facial expressions, and language. Yet, cultural differences can be extreme. Take, for instance, American deference toward emotionally sensitive leaders and Asian respect for emotionally tough executives.<sup>162</sup> In addition to other cultural differences, often listed as power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculine/feminine, and long-term/short-term orientations, scholars generally distinguish between individualistic and collectivistic cultural orientations.<sup>163</sup> This difference alone is said to influence worldviews, expectations, and preferences.

To highlight the difference between individualistic and collectivistic societies, Michael Spangle and Myra Isenhardt contend that members of individualistic cultures are solution-oriented, prefer independent decision-making, approach issues directly, value autonomy, emphasize cause and effect, and express a greater interest in personal needs; conversely, members of collectivistic cultures are relationship oriented, prefer group decision-making, avoid conflict, desire social approval, appeal to authority, and express a greater interest in group needs.<sup>164</sup> In terms of an interpersonal relationship style, Bernard Mayer suggests that members of individualistic societies are commonly “direct, ostensibly rational, and linear,” while members of collectivistic cultures are generally “indirect, emotional, and intuitive.”<sup>165</sup>

Although cultures differ significantly, Mayer goes on to write that there “are continuities among most cultures, and these are what help us bridge what sometimes appear to be enormous cultural differences.”<sup>166</sup> Bridge builders, those adept at communicating across cultures, who often do so without the aid of a common language, bond effectively over core issues with partners.

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<sup>162</sup> Goldsmith, Baldoni, and McArthur, *The AMA Handbook*, 38.

<sup>163</sup> For more information about the four other dimensions of cultural differences, see Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1991). For understanding cultural identity, one of the core elements of human interaction, see Stella Ting-Toomey, *Communicating Across Cultures* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1999).

<sup>164</sup> Spangle and Isenhardt, *Negotiation: Communication in Diverse Settings*, 369.

<sup>165</sup> Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict*, 95.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

To understand this basic assertion, it is important to describe Mayer's "wheel" of human interaction. His model depicts twelve distinct regions that serve to explain the driving forces behind human conflict. Mayer suggests that "the closer to the center of the wheel we look, the more cross-cultural continuities we will find, and the more we focus on the perimeter, the more cultures will vary."<sup>167</sup> Specifically, the likelihood of building trust and mutual respect is greater when we focus on our partners' basic needs (survival, interests, and identity).

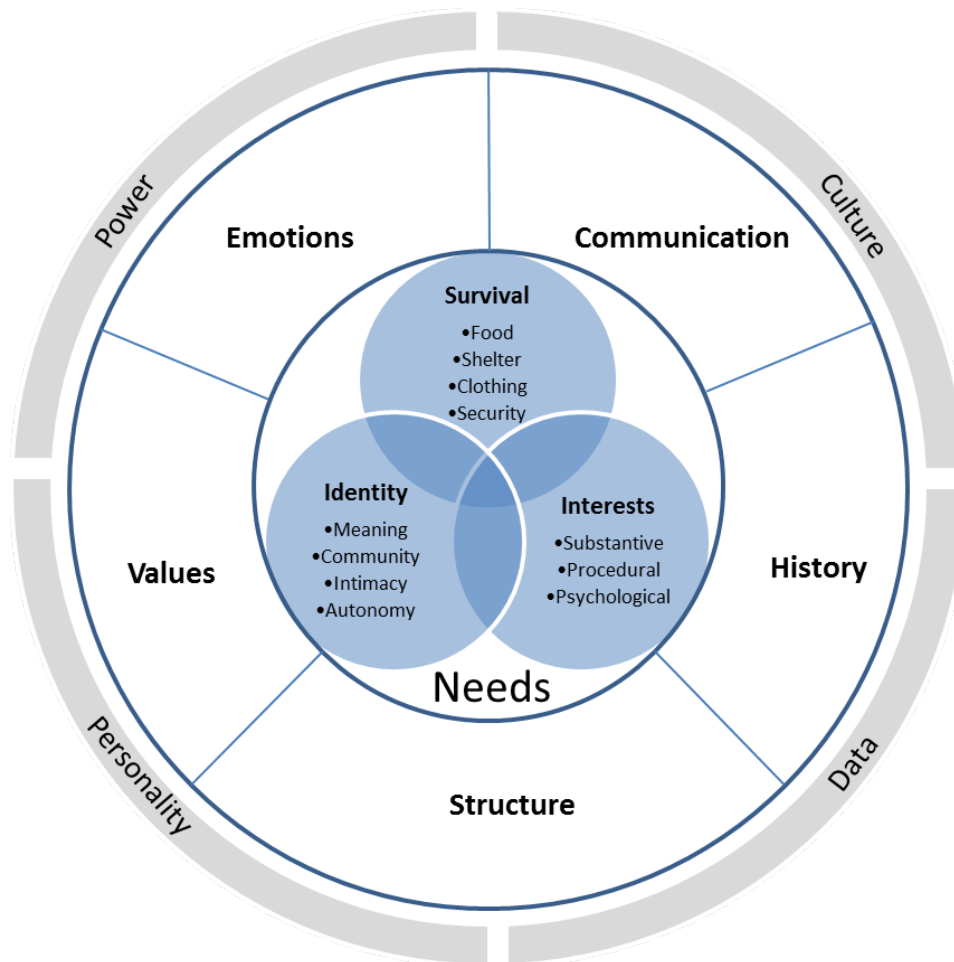


Figure 2. Bernard Mayer's Wheel of Conflict<sup>168</sup>

<sup>167</sup> Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict*, 100.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 10-22.



Although neither comprehensive nor perfectly applicable in every situation, Mayer's wheel equips Special Forces personnel with an intellectual framework to craft effective relationship building campaigns.

Although intellectual study and cognitive understanding of cultural differences are key to building effective partnerships, equally important is one's ability to genuinely relate to JIIM partners as individuals, not just as carriers of cultural tendencies. This is congruent with how Mayer summarizes the case for empathy, respect, and authenticity; he notes, "but all the good [bridge building] techniques in the world will not make up for a lack of genuine interest in what someone else has to say or the absence of a sincere desire to communicate effectively."<sup>169</sup>

It turns out that the EI skills that enable self-awareness and effective action, such as disciplined introspection, recognition of emotion, and assimilation of emotion into thought, are the same skills turned outward that encourage cultural awareness and appropriate response. Empowered by a genuineness of spirit and expressed through authentic interest, emotionally intelligent operators serve as bridge builders. In Gladwell's typology, these individuals are Connectors—those who have a special gift for bringing the world together.<sup>170</sup> Connectors epitomize the balance of emotion and cognition, and are gifted communicators. This is perhaps one reason why SOCOM is providing Yale with a \$1.8 million grant to "monitor developments in neuroscience, give periodic updates on those developments and create a course that will improve U.S. Special Operations Forces abilities to communicate with members of other cultures."<sup>171</sup>

Communicating effectively with members of other cultures is enhanced through persistent presence or enduring engagements, which increases an operator's familiarity with a different culture. However, persistent presence often comes with the price of stressed and strained ties with family. Of particular note, *SOCOM 2020* recognizes the

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<sup>169</sup> Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict*, 184.

<sup>170</sup> Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*, 38.

<sup>171</sup> Jim Shelton, "Green Berets Training at Yale? Not Yet," *Military.com*, February 22, 2013, <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2013/02/22/green-berets-training-at-yale-not-yet.html> (accessed February 24, 2013).

need to “provide responsive counseling, medical, psychological, and rehabilitative care to institutionalize the resiliency of our SOF warriors and their families.”<sup>172</sup> Positive emotionality expressed through optimism, curiosity, humor, serenity, and joy, are closely related to resilience, which is characterized by the ability to “bounce back” from negative experiences and by “flexible adaptation” to dynamic demands.<sup>173</sup> Individuals who are psychologically resilient are also physiologically resilient, exhibiting faster cardiovascular recovery from negative emotional arousal.<sup>174</sup>

In terms of coping, “finding positive meaning in negative circumstances broadens one’s scope of attention and cognition,” and results from cognitive appraisal.<sup>175</sup> As was the case with optimism, finding positive meaning is not to blindly ignore reality, but rather it consists of cognitively reframing a situation to appreciate the current or potential benefits. A simple example is the reframing of an eight month deployment to focus on the ability to save enough money to buy a new family car, rather than dwelling on the time apart from loved ones. Although SOCOM is committed to providing “responsive” and “rehabilitative” care to encourage resiliency, one should question why pre-emptive training is not included in the current strategy.

Such training, based on classical conditioning and extinction—the brain’s adaptive system that appropriately associates response to stimuli—directly relates to EI and Mayer and Salovey’s fourth branch, regulation and management of emotion. Intelligent regulation is based on three discrete skills: inhibition, discrimination, and adaptation to change.<sup>176</sup> Inhibition is the ability to control or suppress an emotion that is already in progress. Discrimination, as the second skill, speaks to functionality and one’s ability to differentiate between when an emotion is appropriate and when it is not. Lastly, adaptation to change relates to the element of time and how some emotions may be appropriate at one time, but not at others. These skills are developed through numerous

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<sup>172</sup> *SOCOM 2020*, 6.

<sup>173</sup> Barrett and Salovey, *The Wisdom in Feeling*, 325.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 327.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 331.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

training (learning) mechanisms. For example, emotional awareness coupled with cognitive appraisal and assent is learned through interactive situational environments, such as those employed by the OSS selection staff. Repeated exposure to such non-threatening environments encourages individuals to reflect on their actions through introspection, dialogue, and peer-evaluation. Pre-emptive processing assists in the conditioning of behavior, equipping Special Forces personnel and their families with the necessary skills and abilities to remain resilient in the face of adversity.

Although partially redundant with *SOCOM 2020* and the *USSOCOM Operating Concept*, *ARSOF 2022* outlines the skills and abilities particular to Army special operators required to thicken the Global SOF Network.

### **C. ARSOF 2022: RECOVERING AND REVITALIZING THE FORCE**

The same intellectual framework of external drivers presented in USSOCOM's *2020* and the *Operating Concept* anchors USASOC's vision of the force in 2022. Constrained resources, proliferation of illegal and covert networks, and other global trends represent some of the many forces that *ARSOF 2022* takes into account. Consequently, *ARSOF 2022* describes a world in which USASOC can "provide joint-force commanders scalable nodes, with unmatched levels of tactical skill and language and cultural expertise, which establish persistent and distributed networks that provide the nation precise and nuanced asymmetric capability."<sup>177</sup>

This nuanced capability depends on ARSOF Soldiers being "adaptable, mature, innovative, culturally aware, self-assured, and self-reliant."<sup>178</sup> The August 2012 ADP 3–05 further describes ARSOF Soldiers as "language trained, regionally aligned, culturally astute, politically nuanced, trained in mediation and negotiation, expected to operate autonomously, proficient at interorganizational coordination, and proficient with and enabled by application of advanced technologies."<sup>179</sup> Given that emotions are critical

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<sup>177</sup> "ARSOF 2022," *Special Warfare* 26, no. 2 (April–June 2013): 17–48, 25.

<sup>178</sup> United States Army, *Army Special Operations Forces*, FM 3–05 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, September 2006), 1–11.

<sup>179</sup> United States Army, *Special Operations*, ADP 3–05 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, August 2012), 13.

components of nearly all of these diverse domains, developing EI through training initiatives should be a foregone conclusion. Interestingly, however, *ARSOF 2022*, other supporting Army publications, and this author's personal experience suggest the opposite. Excluding personal counseling sessions and individually motivated study, the Army has yet to institutionalize a training program focused on teaching Soldiers about themselves, their emotions, or their ability to appropriately and effectively regulate and respond to their environments.

In an effort to reverse this trend, USASOC is actively implementing programs that invest in human capital. In order to retain a decisive advantage over our adversaries, *ARSOF 2022* posits that USASOC "will seek a variety of solutions to optimize our human capital, including: enhanced education and training and increased diversity of human capital. To ensure the health of our force, our focus will continue to be on the preservation of our force and their families."<sup>180</sup> Such solutions include the Tactical Human Optimization, Rapid Rehabilitation and Reconditioning (THOR3) and Human Dynamics and Operator Resiliency Programs.<sup>181</sup> Such programs signal a shift from single to multi-domain training, and begin to address the glaring gap in USASOC's holistic education of its operators. One such gap exists in developing self and unit awareness and accurate appraisal of ability.

The current Special Forces culture discourages openness about inadequacies, as this reveals weakness and an inability to pull one's own operational weight. The community is clearly aware of the stigma, and is actively pursuing ways to change this. Identifying personal limitations is the critical first step to avoiding operational overreach. Perhaps not surprisingly, the trait that most discourages people from overreaching their potential and enables them to be more honest is humility. Confident humility involves being sure of oneself, while remaining continually open to learn from others. As outlined in the brief discussion of empathy above, listening deeply to and learning from others communicates respect, which is a precondition of trust. As Deborah Flick puts it,

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<sup>180</sup> "ARSOF 2022," 18.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

“listening deeply to someone is an expression of generosity. Generosity begets generosity. An atmosphere of generosity breeds a sense of abundance, that there is enough for everyone.”<sup>182</sup>

Self-assured and humble operators know and share themselves, talk about their lives, and are open about their fears and aspirations.<sup>183</sup> However, it should be noted that self-disclosure involves a measure of risk, and, therefore, does not equate to blanket permission to reveal inappropriate thoughts and feelings. As cognitive assent is critical to emotional management, so too is carefully choosing what to reveal and when to reveal it.<sup>184</sup> This appropriate disclosure leads to predictability, which is an essential quality of working with others—whether cross-culturally or within one’s own community. One particular strength associated with confident humility is an individual’s freedom to recognize “the need to change, without becoming defensive and denying the need to change. He is able to confidently and comfortably face criticism or rejection by others.”<sup>185</sup> This strength is closely related to optimism and the sense of bouncing back from rejection and frustration.

Humility is also an essential component of selfless service. Humility permits individuals to place the needs of others before their own, reflecting a depth of caring for and supporting partners’ needs. As USASOC strives to build and mature the Global SOF Network, identifying partners who share similar interests and are willing to work to meet U.S. policy end states is important, but should not represent the full purpose of the network. Equally important is the task of listening deeply to partners as they communicate their interests and needs, in order to lend subsequent personal and unit support of their desired end states. Submitting SOCOM’s service to partners’ needs would signal a shift in our culture toward honoring, rather than simply paying lip service to, humility and selfless service.

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<sup>182</sup> Deborah L. Flick, *From Debate to Dialogue: Using the Understanding Process to Transform Our Conversations* (Boulder, CO: Orchid Publications, 1998), 32.

<sup>183</sup> Goldsmith, Baldoni, and McArthur, *The AMA Handbook of Leadership*, 175.

<sup>184</sup> Weisinger, *Emotional Intelligence at Work*, 110.

<sup>185</sup> Simmons and Simmons, *Measuring Emotional Intelligence*, 77.

Caring for and serving others comes at a price, however, and is expressed in dollars committed, hours given, physical energy spent, and emotions expressed. Gladwell contends that “caring about someone deeply is exhausting. At a certain point, at somewhere between 10 and 15 people, we begin to overload, just as we begin to overload when we have to distinguish between too many tones.”<sup>186</sup> Remaining aware of personal limitations may be one of the first steps toward reversing the current elevated rates of mission fatigue, apathy, emotional numbness, divorce, and suicide, all symptoms reported by active-duty SOF and their family members in a recent SOCOM-sponsored survey.<sup>187</sup> Although no single factor exclusively influences psychopathologies, such elevated rates may be correlated to simply selecting the wrong personnel, or at a minimum, failure to increase EI and resilience through training.

A second gap in USASOC’s education program relates to “professional development.” The Special Forces community, at the level of Group and below, typically gathers about once-a-quarter to conduct a centralized professional development session. These sessions focus on such germane topics as interagency coordination and irregular warfare, and are generally presented in a less than collegial, dialogic manner; generally, an individual presents and a cohort receives, with limited opportunity for conversation. In contrast, holding a professional *dialogue* would encourage critical analysis, coherent argumentation, and would advance the organization’s ownership of the topic being discussed. As Flick argues when promoting a culture of dialogue, “ideas flow more easily and our willingness to explore them deeply and non-defensively is heightened.”<sup>188</sup>

A culture of dialogue was also central to ancient philosophy, perhaps best epitomized in the teaching and community-of-life styles of Plato’s Academy and Aristotle’s Lyceum. Both philosophers felt that oral dialogue, not written discourse, was the more effective means by which individuals could learn about themselves, others, and

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<sup>186</sup> Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*, 177.

<sup>187</sup> Michelle Tan, “Frayed from War: Spec Ops Reports Alcohol Abuse, Stress, Sleeplessness,” *Military Times*, July 27, 20013, <http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20130727/BENEFITS06/307270005/-Frayed-from-war-Spec-ops-reports-alcohol-abuse-stress-sleeplessness> (accessed August 5, 2013).

<sup>188</sup> Flick, *From Debate to Dialogue*, 17.

life. Perspectives gained through self-discovery were tested through the fire of dialogue, requiring the philosophers' pupils to master EI skills and traits, such as self-control, humility, and empathy. In response to ancient philosophy's deference for dialogue, Pierre Hadot's observation that "there is no real knowledge outside the living dialogue," challenges our individualistic tendencies and dependence on reason without emotion.<sup>189</sup> Debate requires logic and reason. Dialogue, on the other hand, demands logic, reason, and the interpersonal skills that flow from EI. Dialogue also played a central role in assessing the composite intelligence of OSS candidates.

Recognizing the need to gauge who was effective at social relations with dialogue, the OSS assessment staff created the discussion/debate exercise to evaluate candidates' comfort in formulating and expressing opinions, while suffering the pressures of others' criticism. The following summarizes the staff's description of an emotionally intelligent and cognitively competent candidate:

Cooperation and good will marked the man with superior Social Relations. He was tolerant of the expression of opinions with which he did not agree, and no matter how forcefully he might attack them he never did so with meanness or malice, and never with *ad hominem* arguments. Just as he was fair in his criticism of the views of others, so he accepted willingly and pleasantly criticism of his own opinions. He was patient in hearing others out, courteous and considerate of his colleagues in their attempts to present views even though they clashed with his. More reliable than any other sign perhaps was a good sense of humor and an ability to laugh at himself.<sup>190</sup>

This lengthy description highlights critical EI skills and abilities, such as tolerance, self-control, patience, courtesy of others, and a sense of humor. At present, the Special Forces culture is one of debate, not dialogue. Arguably, dialogue-based professional development sessions, particularly in smaller groups, might encourage empathy, patience, and self-control, and other critical EI-related attributes.

The emotionally intelligent Special Forces Soldier, one who displays empathy, patience, optimism, and humility, begins to resemble some aspects of USASOC's

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<sup>189</sup> Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 72.

<sup>190</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 131–132.

description of ARSOF operators. In the absence of an institutionalized training program focused on enhancing emotional intelligence, one might assume that ARSOF operators are selected already possessing adequate EI. But—we might wonder—is this true?

#### **D. PRODUCING TOMORROW’S WARRIOR DIPLOMAT**

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), United States Army Special Forces Command (USASFC) is charged with assessing, selecting, educating, training, and developing tomorrow’s warrior diplomats. Arguably, the most critical component of the “pipeline” is the assessment and selection of the right personnel, given the reality that training to enhance particular technical, interpersonal, and behavioral skills is easier than training to enhance character. Poor character leads to poor decision-making, which even enhanced physical and psychological fitness cannot reverse. As such, special attention is given to evaluate the whole man by screening individuals’ performance, both in terms of behavior and cognition, to reveal character and competence. In many ways, the assessment methodology used today to evaluate and select Special Forces Soldiers is the same as that used to assess the operatives, spies, and saboteurs of the OSS during World War II.

##### **1. Methodology and EI Testing**

The assessment center methodology used by USASFC today (1) organizes the assessment process around target dimensions, (2) uses behavior to predict behavior, (3) has two or more individuals independently observe and evaluate, (4) develops a system that ensures all target dimensions are covered and that uses inputs from multiple sources, (5) organizes a discussion so two or more assessors systematically share and debate their behavioral insights and relate these findings to each target dimension prior to reaching an overall decision, and (6) uses simulations to stimulate behavior to be observed.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Brian Decker, “SFAS,” unpublished PowerPoint slide show, September 19, 2013, slide 14; and William C. Byham, “The Assessment Center Method and Methodology: New Applications and Technologies,” [http://www.ddiworld.com/DDIWorld/media/white-papers/AssessmentCenterMethods\\_mg\\_ddi.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.ddiworld.com/DDIWorld/media/white-papers/AssessmentCenterMethods_mg_ddi.pdf?ext=.pdf) (accessed October 28, 2013), 21–22.



Although these components may be described in different terms, all six can likewise be found in the multiform organismic methodology.<sup>192</sup>

However, one area of significant difference pertains to (2) using behavior to predict behavior. Although the OSS assessment staff understood and depended on the fact that current behavior is one of the best predictors of future behavior, they gave more weight to their conceived personality as a whole measurement.<sup>193</sup> By supplementing observed behavior with personality as a whole, the OSS staff was able to determine operational fit and increase the predictive accuracy of a candidate's future performance.<sup>194</sup> In so doing, the OSS valued the trained professionals' projected personality over the standardized pencil-to-paper tests that rendered a personality without analysis.<sup>195</sup>

Although USASFC employs psychologists to conduct interviews and observe candidate behavior during specific portions of SFAS, it makes heavy use of managers—in this case other Green Berets—as the primary observers of performance.<sup>196</sup> Using managers, not psychologists, as assessors, decreases the costs and time associated with the multiform organismic methodology, but may fail to provide adequate insight into germane psychological dimensions of the Special Forces candidates.<sup>197</sup> To offset this discrepancy, SFAS requires each candidate to answer the 338-item Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory 2 Restructured Form (MMPI-2-RF), which “assesses major symptoms of psychopathology, personality characteristics, behavioral tendencies, interpersonal functioning, and personal interest.”<sup>198</sup> The question this raises is, do the

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<sup>192</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 28–57. This section outlines the eight mechanical steps followed by the OSS assessment staff in their creation of the multiform organismic methodology. Although insufficient space is available to discuss them comprehensively here, the reader is encouraged to review this portion to see how closely the two methodologies resemble one another.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 30, 570.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>196</sup> Glenn Thomas and Michael Sahms, “1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne),” unpublished PowerPoint slide show, no date, slide 11.

<sup>197</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 282.

<sup>198</sup> Decker, “SFAS,” 19.

psychologists' evaluations of the test and their limited observation of candidate behavior provide adequate data points to accurately predict personality as a whole?

With an insufficient number of professionally trained psychologists to replicate the OSS methodology, but recognizing the importance of well-trained assessors, SFAS actively conducts assessor training that focuses on identifying attributes and the base motivations of candidates. Although SFAS does not currently test EI directly, it is able to assess some of the attributes associated with it. But as even the OSS assessment staff recognized, errors in predicting candidate performance are, in part, associated with the undervaluing or overvaluing of certain attributes that can either be falsely hidden or expressed during assessment.<sup>199</sup> This problem exists for two reasons.

First, candidates can purposely deceive assessors, saying and doing what they think will lead to a positive evaluation. What motivates this behavior is difficult to determine; perhaps only the candidate will ever fully know the root cause of their desire to deceive. Whether their motivations are benign or malicious, such that they flow from blind ambition or poor character, or even if the candidate's motivations and character are prosocial in nature, the resulting behavior is the same. Recognizing the Jekyll and Hyde nature of EI, Stephane Cote et al. assert that "emotion-regulation knowledge facilitates both prosocial and interpersonally deviant behavior by enhancing the motivational effects of traits."<sup>200</sup> Although science suggests that EI and character are independent, both EI and character remain critical variables that cannot be overvalued. Considering that SFAS does screen for character through numerous other means, determining the motivations behind a candidate's emotionally intelligent and effective behavior is less critical. Furthermore, a candidate's peers are generally more than capable of identifying the real charlatans.

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<sup>199</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 435–449.

<sup>200</sup> Stephane Cote, Katherine A. DeCelles, Julie M. McCarthy, Gerben A. Van Kleef, and Ivona Hideg, "The Jekyll and Hyde of Emotional Intelligence: Emotion-Regulation Knowledge Facilitates Both Prosocial and Interpersonally Deviant Behavior," *Psychological Science* 22, no. 8 (2011): 1073-1080, 1079, DOI: 10.1177/0956797611416251 (accessed December 11, 2013).

The second reason why assessors may undervalue or overvalue attributes is because some overlap exists between factors of personality and EI traits. The mixed models (e.g. Goleman's and Bar-On's) "conceptualize EI as comprising elements of both effectiveness of adaptation (ability) and qualitative style of handling challenging encounters (personality)."<sup>201</sup> More simply, the mixed models evaluate traits, not skills, as the Mayer and Salovey model does. Traits of candidates' personalities, such as extraversion, are often linked to elements of EI, such as positive affectivity.<sup>202</sup> Being unable to distinguish between the two makes separating an EI trait from personality from EI skill nearly impossible for the minimally trained SFAS assessor. Thus, it is likely necessary to exclusively adopt an EI test that is able to distinguish skill from trait, and in so doing from personality.

The MSCEIT is a 40-minute battery, ability-based test that depends on consensus or expert evaluation for scoring. Faking EI, therefore, is nearly impossible because the test purports to have right and wrong answers, requiring a certain level of skill to respond correctly.<sup>203</sup> The mixed models are trait-based, self-report generated, and are moderately to highly correlated with personality. Experiments show that participants given trait-based tests, such as Bar-On's EQ-i, were able to "significantly increase their scores . . . when motivated to do so."<sup>204</sup> Ultimately, only the Mayer and Salovey model acts like an intelligence measure, suggesting that associated skills can be enhanced with training and cannot be faked. The MSCEIT enhances an assessor's ability to distinguish skill from trait, and provides a tailored assessment of strengths and weakness, serving as a prescriptive training plan.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*, 321.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 223.

<sup>203</sup> Arla L. Day, and Sarah A. Carroll, "Faking Emotional Intelligence (EI): Comparing Response Distortion on Ability and Trait-based EI Measures," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 29, no. 6 (August 2008): 761–784, 765, <http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.nps.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=dff9bb47-6508-437b-bbea-ac7c7ee6d3bb%40sessionmgr111&vid=2&hid=121> (accessed February 15, 2013).

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 776.

<sup>205</sup> Byham, "The Assessment Center Method and Methodology," 10.

However, and as is the case with any skill needing refinement, the presence of natural ability does not guarantee performance, nor the desire to train. This reality reaffirms a commitment to balance, recognizing the role critical supporting factors such as motivation and leadership play in producing increased performance and enhanced EI.<sup>206</sup> What remains, then, is to examine what factors are most important to SFAS and whether they relate to the historical example of the OSS.

## 2. SFAS Attributes: Uncovering EI in Assessment and Selection

Although the OSS assessment staff struggled to outline job requirements, staff members settled on seven general variables, all of which were essential to accomplishing the mission. In a similar fashion, SFAS evaluates eight attributes reflective of the whole man. Although the methodologies are similar, Table 1 compares the OSS variables and the SFAS attributes, suggesting at a minimum a semantic difference between the two.

OSS Variables <sup>207</sup>	SFAS Attributes <sup>208</sup>
1) Motivation for assignment (commitment to work)	1) Integrity
2) Energy and initiative	2) Courage
3) Practical (effective) intelligence	3) Perseverance
4) Emotional stability	4) Personal responsibility
5) Social relationships (e.g., team work)	5) Professionalism
6) Leadership	6) Adaptability
7) Security	7) Team Player
	8) Capability

Table 1. Seven OSS Variables vs. Eight SFAS Attributes

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<sup>206</sup> Joseph C. Rode, Christine H. Mooney, Marne L. Arthaud-Day, Janet P. Near, Timothy T. Baldwin, Robert S. Rubin, and William H. Bommer, "Emotional Intelligence and Individual Performance: Evidence of Direct and Moderated Effects," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 28, no. 4 (May 2007): 399–421, 413, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30162566> (accessed January 28, 2013); and Leanne E. Atwater, "Beyond Cognitive Ability: Improving the Prediction of Performance," *Journal of Business and Psychology* 7, no. 1 (Fall 1992): 27–44, 36, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25092360> (accessed January 28, 2013).

<sup>207</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 30–31.

<sup>208</sup> SFAS Crosswalk Attributes, unpublished paper, no date; Decker, "SFAS," 5, 7.

For instance, while the OSS strongly associated emotional stability and social relations with motivation and endurance, USASFC fails to incorporate the emotional dimension in its definition of perseverance. To the SFAS assessor, the perseverance attribute is defined as “works towards an end; has commitment; physical or mental resolve; motivated; gives effort to the cause; does not quit.”<sup>209</sup> The focus on mental and physical toughness ignores the critical inclusion of emotions, and the role EI plays in perseverance. Worth noting is that the OSS assessment staff concluded that a candidate with optimum emotional stability could devote his energies and abilities completely to the task at hand “without concern on his part as to how he was doing or what others might think of him. He could consider the situation confronting him for what it actually was and would not be distracted by hardships, or frustrations, or the personalities of those around him.”<sup>210</sup> The ability to remain focused on the task at hand, despite distractions, *is* essentially perseverance, and is captured by the Army’s current emphasis on resiliency.

Further review of the four remaining SFAS attributes reveals a closeness between the concept of personal responsibility and the OSS variable of leadership. To the OSS assessors, leadership was less important than emotional stability or social relations. For the SFAS staff, personal responsibility means a candidate is “self-motivated and an autonomous, self-starter; can anticipate tasks and acts accordingly; takes accountability for his actions.”<sup>211</sup> The first and second branches of Mayer and Salovey’s model—accurate appraisal of emotion and utilization of emotion to facilitate thought and action—involve being aware of one’s emotions and thoughts about emotions. Utilizing that information to effect a desired outcome is “essential for selective attention, self-monitoring, [and] self-motivation.”<sup>212</sup> Being responsible for self is, therefore, a basic outcome of judiciously determining appropriate action through assimilating emotion into thought. Reflecting only the first two branches of the model accents the weak correlation

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<sup>209</sup> SFAS Crosswalk Attributes.

<sup>210</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 285.

<sup>211</sup> SFAS Crosswalk Attributes.

<sup>212</sup> Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*, 181.

between personal responsibility and EI. However, review of the final three attributes reflects a higher correlation with EI, and a similar interdependence as the three EI-relevant, OSS variables demonstrated.

The attributes of professionalism, adaptability, and team player isolate traits and abilities most representative of EI. The SFAS staff appropriately includes “level of maturity mixed with confidence and humility” in the conception and description of professionalism.<sup>213</sup> They go so far as to list “emotionally stable” as a subcomponent of being professional, illuminating the first true mirroring between the OSS variables and SFAS attributes. Having already discussed confident humility and its connection to EI, it is necessary to comment only on maturity here. Composite maturation of cognition, emotion, and behavior “remains largely dependent on an elaborate set of social and environmental factors.”<sup>214</sup> Rather than provide a deep analysis of the numerous variables that impact maturity, returning to neurobiology may best serve to illuminate the process to any reader.

Recall that the prefrontal cortex acts as the brain’s executive center, directing neural function after activation. Preparing for a task is key to activation; without it, the PFC will not switch on in advance, lowering directed mental activity and reaction time to the physical response, which often accounts for ineffective behavior.<sup>215</sup> Generally speaking, the OSS assessment staff identified maturity as being fundamentally a function of objectively analyzing oneself, and is one of the two primary components of emotional stability, the other being emotional control.<sup>216</sup> Self-awareness and objective analysis are preparatory aspects of action, which encourage increased mental focus and result in effective behavior. Maturity, meanwhile, is the result of increased preparation through objective self-awareness, which closely resembles Mayer and Salovey’s fourth branch, regulation of emotion. Mature special operators objectively recognize the onset of both positive and negative attitudes, initiating preparatory mental activity to control and

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<sup>213</sup> SFAS Crosswalk Attributes.

<sup>214</sup> Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts, *Emotional Intelligence*, 426

<sup>215</sup> Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*, 142-143.

<sup>216</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 513.

channel the power of their emotions and thoughts into appropriate behavior.<sup>217</sup> Basically, mature operators understand how to effectively and appropriately respond to their environments while remaining emotionally stable. Maturity leads to adaptability, which is also closely related to EI.

In many ways, SFAS's conception of adaptability is akin to professionalism. This overlap is expected, though, as even the OSS assessment staff recognized the interdependence and mutuality of the variables surrounding a candidate's control and expression of emotion, specifically those of motivation, emotional stability, social relations, and leadership.<sup>218</sup> Adaptability includes the following aptitudes:

The ability to maintain composure while responding to or adjusting one's own thinking and actions to fit a changing environment; the ability to think and solve problems in unconventional ways; the ability to recognize, understand, and navigate within multiple social networks; and the ability to proactively shape the environment or circumstances in anticipation of desired outcomes.<sup>219</sup>

In both cases, adaptability is the net result of emotion regulation in self and others, which reflects Mayer and Salovey's fourth branch of EI.

In their introduction of the EI model in 1990, Salovey and Mayer suggested that individuals adept at regulating emotion in themselves and others may "enhance their own and others' moods and even manage emotions so as to motivate others charismatically toward a worthwhile end."<sup>220</sup> This is adaptability at its finest—shaping the environment toward one's desired end state. Certainly, thickening the Global SOF Network will require a full measure of adaptability, with special operators empowered to mold and shape the psychological battlefield to gain the trust and confidence of partners through genuine respect and mutual support, which is the essence of being a team player.

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<sup>217</sup> Regulation is both *antecedent-focused*, which pertains to situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, and cognitive change, and *response-focused*, which solely relates to response modulation. For more on regulation, see Barrett and Salovey, *The Wisdom in Feeling*, 304. For techniques of regulation, such as concentration, rumination, and meditation, see Shipman, et al., *A Model of Emotion Management*, 16.

<sup>218</sup> The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men*, 284.

<sup>219</sup> SFAS Crosswalk Attributes.

<sup>220</sup> Salovey and Mayer, "Emotional Intelligence," 198.

Selection cadre describe the ideal candidate as someone who is “able to work on a team for a greater purpose than himself; be dependable and loyal; work selflessly with a sense of duty; respect others and recognizes diversity.”<sup>221</sup> A candidate motivated to become a Green Beret will temporarily place the needs of the team before his own. The OSS assessment staff frequently lamented that their short 3-day course made observing authentic behavior difficult. In sharp contrast, SFAS is currently nineteen days long, making forced selflessness more difficult to sustain. Authentic behavior is habitual in nature, and is difficult to hide or change, giving the SFAS assessors sufficient time to evaluate a candidate’s true penchant for team work.

Genuine respect, as a component of teamwork, stems from humility and the empathetic belief that teammates have intrinsic value and belong to one’s same community. This belief inspires a sense of duty, requiring service to one’s teammates because they essentially deserve it, not because their behaviors merit it. At the core, this loosely describes love—serving others’ best interests, whether they deserve it or not. And although *philia* (brotherly love) is seldom discussed within the special operations community, its tenets are idealized and followed. This is the same type of love classically expressed in John 15:13: “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friend.”<sup>222</sup>

While the attributes of professionalism, adaptability, and team player resemble EI, the OSS variables of emotional stability, social relations, and leadership more closely reflect EI-related skills and abilities. Despite the minimal differences, which are most likely semantic in nature, SFAS is aware of and is actively assessing each candidate’s emotional dimension. What remains unclear is whether SFAS believes, as the OSS did, that emotional stability is central to a candidate’s overall suitability for special operations. Although the high-risk operational environment of today is significantly different from what it was during World War II, and what it will be in 2022 for that matter, the importance of selecting the right personnel, those equipped with the

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<sup>221</sup> SFAS Crosswalk Attributes.

<sup>222</sup> John 15:13 (New International Version).



interpersonal skills and abilities to develop the long, loyal, and self-sacrificing friendships required to build the Global SOF Network, remains the same. In an effort to describe the traits of the ideal high-risk operator, James Picano, Thomas Williams, and Robert Roland propose that such an individual would exhibit the following:

Exceptional stress tolerance, emotional stability, and physical fitness; a high degree of intrinsic motivation, initiative, and competitive drive; exceptional reliability and integrity; and capacity for sound judgment and reasoning under stress. Tough-minded and independent, these individuals may be more or less gregarious and interpersonally skilled.<sup>223</sup>

This description clearly illustrates that excellence is achieved in balancing cognitive and emotional intelligence, which is firmly supported by sound character and physical strength.

Therefore, Special Forces operators' ability to perceive emotion, to integrate and assimilate emotion into thought, their knowledge about emotions, and their ability to manage emotions remains a fundamental skill required to build and maintain the Global SOF Network. As Admiral McRaven exhorts special operators to imagine what a networked 2020 will look like, one might stop to consider what that network might look like deprived of emotionally intelligent operators capable of extending genuine respect through humble service to partners. Incorporating EI may signal the beginning of actually assessing, selecting, training, educating, and developing the emotional and interpersonal dimension of Special Forces operators.

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<sup>223</sup> James P. Picano, Thomas J. Williams, and Robert R. Roland, "Assessment and Selection of High-Risk Operational Personnel," in *Military Psychology: Clinical and Operational Applications*, Carrie H. Kennedy, and Eric A. Zillmer, eds (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2006): 353–370, 367.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Don't only practice your art, but force your way into its secrets, for it and knowledge can raise men to the divine.<sup>224</sup>

This study has been propelled by the notion that balance between thought and emotion might result in increased capacity to build the Global SOF Network. Detailed research discovered that substantial scientific evidence supports EI, that the OSS recognized the central importance of emotional stability—the forerunner of EI—and that the special operations community expects operators to already possess the skills and abilities associated with EI. Although it was important to recognize the nascency of EI and the scientific community's need to reach a consensus with regard to definition, it was also critical to highlight Mayer and Salovey's four-branch model and the MSCEIT as the most reliable construct and test, making it possible to distinguish skill from trait and effectively separate EI from personality.

These insights should inform the ongoing dialogue about the human dimension, and about the role emotions play in strengthening special operations personnel and the Joint Force of 2020. Since "EI brings together the fields of emotions and intelligence by viewing emotions as useful sources of information that help one to make sense of and navigate the social environment," it would be foolish to ignore the potential EI has to positively influence the Global SOF Network.<sup>225</sup> Broadening the Special Forces Regiment's view to include EI will provide current and future operators with the opportunity to enhance the critical relationship building skills required to operate

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<sup>224</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/501895-don-t-only-practice-your-art-but-force-your-way-into> (accessed November 7, 2013).

<sup>225</sup> Peter Salovey and Daisy Grewal, "The Science of Emotional Intelligence," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 14, no. 6 (December 2005): 281–285, 281, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20183048> (accessed December 11, 2013).

effectively within the JIIM environment. The Global SOF Network will require operators who understand themselves and others, and who are able to develop reliable relationships through the toughness of truth and the tenderness of empathy and patience.

As the special operations community strives to build the Global SOF Network, it would do well to remember Emerson's assertion that "the essence of friendship is entireness, a total magnanimity and trust."<sup>226</sup> Genuine generosity of spirit leads to trust, which encourages a sense of wholeness and contentment. This is the type of friendship that results in being long, loyal, and self-sacrificing. Relating well to current and future JIIM partners is based to a certain extent on special operators' collective ability to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions in themselves and others. Although pursuing EI promises to enhance essential interpersonal skills, as well as develop resiliency, it remains only one of many key competencies required to operate in the high-risk, special operations environment. As such, one question remains: what will the special operations community do with EI?

To begin with, USASFC might consider the following recommendations and areas of additional research. The recommendations are preliminary in nature, and strive more to develop an appreciation and understanding of emotions than to institutionalize EI. The recommendations are broken down into three general categories: assessment, training, and placement. These categories reflect a basic belief that selecting the right personnel, developing them holistically, and assigning them to the right jobs will produce the most effective force. The areas of additional research are closely connected with EI, and provide a fuller description of how the Global SOF Network may be assembled and maintained.

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<sup>226</sup> Emerson, *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 236.

## **A. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Special Forces Assessment and Selection**

- Incorporate the MSCEIT as a baseline measurement of a candidate's EI-related skills and abilities. The test also identifies weaknesses, providing personalized prescriptive training plans if a candidate is selected.
- Formally add the emotional dimension to the attribute of perseverance, thus keying assessors into the complex, tri-dimensionalism of cognition, emotion, and physical behavior most reflective of the whole man.
- Incorporate the use of a dialogue to assess a candidate's interpersonal skills and abilities. Current SFAS class sizes make it impossible to conduct small group dialogues for every candidate. Initial focus should be on officers and warrant officers, and other candidates flagged for poor interpersonal competency or other psychopathologies.
- Revise the current personal (self) and peer evaluation forms to include a section that highlights key EI competencies, triggering candidates to consider the importance of interpersonal abilities.
- Conduct longitudinal studies to chart the importance of EI and operator performance.
- Implement a periodic or event-driven reassessment to determine operators' suitability to continue serving within Special Forces. Further research is required to determine appropriate time windows for periodic reassessment. Event-driven criteria may include combat deployments, significant family trauma (e.g., suicide, divorce, or loss of family members), and prolonged employment in an imbalanced boots on the ground to dwell ratio.

### **2. Training**

- Provide classes that introduce special operators to emotions, aiding their basic understanding and ability to perceive and assimilate emotion into thought and action. Basic courses could be taught during the Special Forces Qualification Course, while advanced courses could be taught at the unit level.
- Conduct situational environment tests to elicit emotional responses. These tests should include a feedback loop, either through peer or expert review, and should be filmed for the subject's personal analysis and reflection.

- Provide classes on negotiation and consensus building, requiring operators to actively participate in dynamic role play scenarios.
- Develop classes on communication and dialogue, equipping operators with theoretical frameworks on which they can build influence campaigns.
- Revamp professional development sessions to encourage dialogue, not debate. This will require institutional and cultural change, and may take years to fully implement.
- Develop courses that aim at directly increasing EI skills and abilities, such as facial affect recognition, social cues, story inference learning, and the onset of both positive and negative emotions.
- Develop classes on philosophy, demonstrating the close connection between how we think and EI.

### **3. Placement (Talent Management)**

- Identify and assign operators with high measures of EI to critical partner-based missions. These missions may include operational or strategic partnerships, such as advising at the ministerial or national levels, or partnerships in sensitive or hostile environments.
- Avoid defaulting to developing relationships based on rank or position. Although a detachment commander might traditionally advise a partner force's battalion commander, the junior weapons sergeant may be able to relate more effectively. Permitting this type of role-reversal highlights an individual's and a unit's *confident humility* and EI.

## **B. AREAS OF ADDITIONAL RESEARCH**

A powerful complementary relationship exists among EI, trust, and networks. As the special operations community begins implementing *USSOCOM 2020* and *ARSOF 2022*, a review of the trust and network literatures is imperative as it directly relates to developing partnerships. The following sources and authors provide an excellent starting point to describe the interdependence of trust, networks, and EI, and their relationship to the Global SOF Network:

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- Albert-László Barabási, *Linked: How Everything Is Connected to Everything Else and What it Means for Business, Science, and Everyday Life*, Penguin Group, 2003.
- Nicholas A. Christakis, and James H. Fowler, *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives—How*

*Your Friends' Friends' Friends Affect Everything You Feel, Think, and Do*, Little, Brown and Company, 2011.

- Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (see List of References)
- Patti Anklam, *Net Work: A Practical Guide to Creating and Sustaining Networks at Work and in the World*, Elsevier, 2007.
- Deborah L. Flick, *From Debate to Dialogue* (see List of References)
- Barbara D. Adams, and Robert D. G. Webb, “Trust in Small Military Teams” (see List of References)
- William Isaacs, *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together: A Pioneering Approach to Communicating in Business and in Life*, Doubleday, 1999.
- Karen Stephenson has made significant contributions to both the trust and network literatures.

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